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# Dungeon

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ISSUE #98 • MAY 2003

by glumag

pizza punishing

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# In This Issue

# Dungeon

*"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die."*

Genesis 6:17



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**J. Bradley Schell**

Blood-sucking evil-doers have been terrorizing remote farms. The locals claim a vampire infestation, but are the fanged, unholy undead really responsible? A D&D Side Trek for 4th-level characters.

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Lions from the mountains have suddenly come to the lowlands and begun attacking travelers. What fell influence has come over the normally reclusive beasts? A D&D Side Trek for 8th-level characters.

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**James Jacobs**

The second installment in the *DUNGEON Magazine Adventure Path* has arrived!

As winter approaches, the rains begin to fall on Cauldron. In the past, this season has been a cause for alarm, but the last few years, it has become a reason for celebration. Suddenly, a prominent Cauldronite is brutally slain, and the rains start to fall. Some dark power is linked to these recent events, and the acclaimed new heroes of Cauldron are beseeched once more to find a solution. A **D&D Adventure Path: *Shackled City*** adventure for 4th-level characters.



**ON THE COVER:** Stephen Daniele paints a disturbing yet alluring portrait of Triel Eldurast, a warrior-priestess of Hextor preparing for battle. She and her companions have dark plans in store for the unsuspecting populace of Cauldron in "Flood Season."





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**ON THE FLIPSIDE:** Up-and-coming cover artist Jake Parker presents *Kunoichi*, silent killer of the *Kage* and star of this month's "Unusual Suspects." Jake's work can be seen in *Mutants & Masterminds* from *Green Ronin Publishing* and *May's Urban Arcana*, from *Wizards of the Coast*.





# Death Becomes Them

**W**e've continued with the Adventure Path campaign playtest here at the office, and I wanted to tell you about a recent development in the campaign that has given me something to think about. Remember, these are game industry professionals: do not attempt this at home.

The PCs made it to the final encounter with Kazmojen in "Life's Bazaar" (from issue #97). Four characters were present: Meechee, the goblin rogue (a new addition courtesy of our new Webmaster, Rob Head), Hallan the halfling with riding dog companion Fergus, Dree the gnome illusionist, and Laurethoron the elven ranger. I think the result of the encounter can best be encompassed by the classic movie, *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome*: Four adventurers enter, one adventurer leaves.

That's right. Kazmojen and his pet howler accounted for a 75% PK (Party Kill). In fact, the only reason Laurethoron survived was because she fled, leaving Hallan, Fergus, and Dree to face the half-troll's chin music. (Meechee was munched in the second round by Prickles the howler.) But that's not the worst part. The worst part is that the bad guy won—Kazmojen got away clean. Not only that, but he managed to sell the children (see "Life's Bazaar" if you have no clue what I'm talking about) and—although my players don't know it yet—Hallan, Fergus, and Dree into slavery. Sure, he had to give up his stronghold and the kidnappings stopped as a result, but he lived and profited. Rarely have I seen villainous success on this magnitude. But really, should adventurers expect any less? The conclusion to the adventure has led me to an important question: what happens when the campaign falls down and goes boom?

I mean, we're talking about a profession (adventuring) in which people make more money in a week than most commoners make their entire lives, and that's at low levels. The risk has to be high to compensate, right? They're bound to fail on occasion. But outside of a playtest, which is really what this campaign boils down to, they're not likely to experience failure all that often. There's a reason for that, although we'd never let our players know it: We, as DMs, secretly want them to win. We're just as big a fan of the heroic victory as the next fantasy goob. We want to see the guys in the white hats triumph, ride off into the sunset, and get the girl (or boy ... or both, if that's your bag). And the PCs almost always do.

But what do you do when the PCs still manage to fail? What happens when, despite your best DMing efforts (and fudged dice rolls), the PCs still go down in flames? What happens if, God forbid, you get the TPK (Total Party Kill)? Some DMs I know say it should never happen—that we DMs have the power to prevent such a catastrophe. But should we? Shouldn't we instead just be prepared enough that if the PCs die, the campaign *doesn't* end?

Do you just declare, "Campaign Off" and start over? Maybe you allow a PC's cohort to escape so he or she can reform the adventuring party to avenge the dead characters. Or maybe you end up capturing some of the PCs who don't reach -10, allowing them to plan a daring escape. Or perhaps you allow the PCs to play some prominent NPC adventurers in the campaign who learn of the original characters' misfortune and take it upon themselves to collect and raise the slain characters. I know there are loads of other solutions out there, but just considering these three, you can see right off that you'd need to do a decent amount of planning to pull off one of these scenarios. But how many of you have just such a contingency in place? Maybe if we all had a TPK Plan, we wouldn't have to work so hard at times to make sure the good guys stay on top.

This seems like the ultimate test of a DM's storytelling ability and creative mojo, and I'd sure like to hear from you folks about this topic. Have you ever slain all the PCs or had to "reboot" (or thought you'd have to)? What did you do? Send me a letter at [dungeon@paizo.com](mailto:dungeon@paizo.com) and tell me your tale.

*Chris*

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# PRISON MAIL

Tell us what you think of this issue. Write to: Prison Mail, 3245 146th Place SE, Suite 110, Bellevue, WA 98007 or send an email to [dungeon@paizopublishing.com](mailto:dungeon@paizopublishing.com).

## 🔥 Flame the Turtle

I have been a fan of your magazine since the launch of the new edition, and I love the idea of going monthly in May. That said, I just wanted to say I've been disappointed with your content in the last few issues, and I'm pretty sure my feelings are shared by quite a few other people. I have purchased mostly every issue thus far. I have noticed that adventures are getting less numerous—four as opposed to 5–6 in some of the earlier issues—and frankly more unusable. I particularly disliked the adventure "Hollow Threats" (issue #96), which my players and I thought was rather silly (I'm still boggled as to how it got published). Maybe it's just me and I don't like anything that doesn't go deep. I tend to like (as do many others, in response to some of your previous letters) rich plotlines combined with evil cultists that provide a sense of eeriness without becoming vile. No, I'm not opposed to the *Book of Vile Darkness*; if players and DMs want to be vile then by all means go out and buy the book. I really do love this magazine. It is the blood and soul of my D&D campaigns, and I'm simply too busy to run homebrew anymore. I truly can't wait for the magazine to go monthly, but for heaven's sake leave out the turtles!

**Eddie Mufflers**  
Via Email

*"Hollow Threats" was printed because it was a cool adventure and an interesting change of pace, so sayeth we editors. It was well received by many readers, and while you might have found it silly, others thought it quite cool. Our point is that we don't expect every adventure to appeal to every reader. We don't print many light adventures, because they often tend to be overly silly. In this case, we think the adventure skirted the*

*line but never came close to crossing it. And the bait-and-switch trick in the adventure was a move that we think will inspire DMs even if they never actually run the module.*

## 🔥 Hubba, Hubba. Who do You Trust?

I began reading issue #97 with your editorial. I immediately stopped when you asked to turn to "Life's Bazaar."

First, it made me realize a few things.

I trust you completely.

I find this unusual since I've never met you.

Whatever.

The fact is that *DUNGEON Magazine* has made my life as a DM incredibly easy. I've had a subscription for roughly a year now and have endured the change to the new edition as well as receiving *POLYHEDRON*. I also have numerous back issues.

In four years, I've had the privilege of DMing three campaigns. They have all included mostly the same PCs. In that time I have used adventures from *DUNGEON Magazine* exclusively. At least twenty-five adventures have been used in some regard. Some have been from older issues (#13) and some from more recent (#91). Regardless of the issue, I find that the quality is unbelievably helpful and detailed. I cannot give you enough thanks.

Many others have contributed to the success of the magazine and to them I also offer my thanks.

The second thing I realized was that "Life's Bazaar" must be awesome.

I haven't read it yet (it's 1:00 A.M. in Chicago) but I'm looking forward to adapting it to my campaign.

Finally, thank you from the bottom of my heart for the hard work you have done with this magazine. It is fantastic, bar none. I look forward to the new monthly system and I know



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it will have the same quality that we have seen in the past year. All other issues aside. I could care less about the price or the “non-D&D” *POLYHEDRON* issues. Anything that is in the magazine is a bonus to DMs everywhere.

Keep up the hard work and know that there are some subscribers out there who think that the work you’ve done is just plain outstanding.

**Paul Rizzo**  
Chicago, IL

### Remember This!

I just read your editorial in *DUNGEON* #96, and I agree that it is very hard for the players to remember details from session to session.

This is especially true if there is more than a week between sessions. About six years ago I decided to start each session with the players discussing exactly what had happened the previous session. I would award them XP according to how accurate and detailed their recollections were. I would also be able to interject important details at the right times if I needed to. This led to the players anticipating the summary of the previous session at the beginning of the next game. They began paying closer attention during the games and keeping detailed notes. These notes eventually evolved into detailed character journals. I now begin each session with the players reading their latest journal entry. I award them XP for the entry, and I award 25–50 points every time they hit upon a key point, make a relevant connection, and so on.

**Ryan Scott Jones**  
Via Email

*We received a remarkable amount of feedback on that editorial. Here are some suggestions from other readers on helping your players remember important campaign details:*

- *Keep a list of important NPCs that includes a brief description of the character and why he or she matters. (Brian Brethauer)*
- *Use cutaway scenes to keep the PCs abreast of other events in the campaign world. (Brian Brethauer)*

- *Use Divination magic (both NPCs and PCs) to keep them up-to-date. (Joseph Gross)*

- *Use email to generate off-camera roleplaying between characters. It speeds up game play and keeps players thinking about the game between sessions. (Jenni A. M. Merrifield)*

- *Present important material more than once. (Edward Reed)*

- *Identify your storytelling players and tie important plotlines to their characters. (Edward Reed)*

### Pro Vile

I was disappointed and somewhat angry to read in issue #97 that you will no longer be publishing mature content. I don’t believe the majority of D&D players include children in their games, and an adult-themed adventure fits into many DMs’ games.

The problem, you see, is that most often the people who are satisfied don’t feel a need to write feedback. The old cliché “the squeaky wheel gets the grease” often applies, because the happy wheels don’t feel that it is necessary to voice their opinion. Meanwhile, the loud people who have the tiniest thing to complain about run to their keyboards at the first opportunity to shake their fist and shout at

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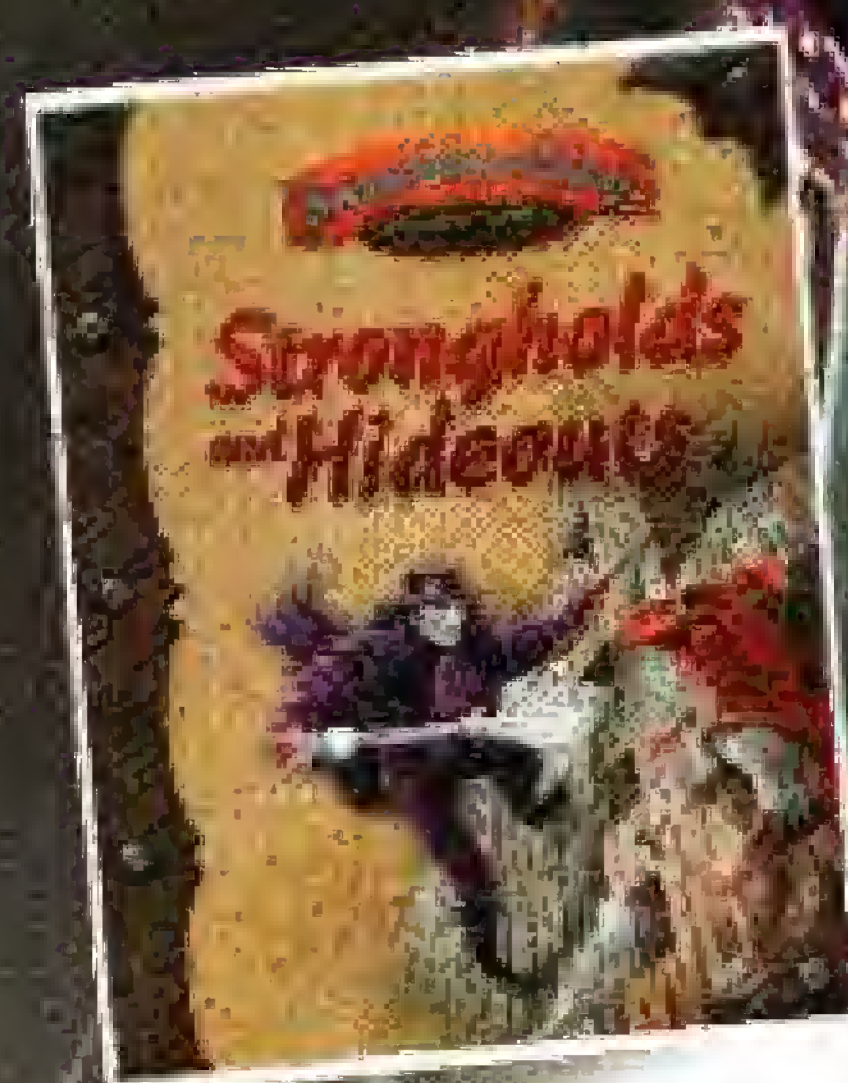
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# A TERROR IS SOMEWHERE WITHIN THAT CASTLE

ALL YOU HAVE  
TO DO IS  
FIND IT



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the slightest thing that angers them.

My suggestion is to look at how many subscribers you have, and how many of them wrote in and complained about the mature content. Then realize that most of the people who did NOT send in complaints and angry threats to end their subscriptions were content with the mature content you presented in issue #95.

Coincidentally, the *Book of Vile Darkness* is my favorite supplement, and I am proud to have it on my bookshelf. It is one of the few D&D books I have sat down and read from cover to cover. I would love to see adventures using the various cults and demon lords as the central focus, or that use spells from the book.

However, if you do choose to avoid mature content in the future, I will not cancel my subscription. I will not write complaint letters, and I will not cease to use your adventures in my campaigns. Your product is excellent, and I know it is impossible to please all the people, all the time. You do a wonderful job trying, though.

**Shane A. White**  
Claremont, NH

*We're well aware that a vocal minority often tries to sway the vote, and we do try to please as many of our readers as we can each issue. Until we said that we didn't have plans to feature more mature content, the bulk of responses were anti-vile. Since then, though, we've received overwhelming support in favor of more vile material. The vote has now swung the other way, and we've put the ball back in our publisher's court. This is a complex issue, and we'll continue to chew on it until we come up with a solution. We hear you!*

## Educational Tool

First off, I'd like to apologize ahead of time for this letter. I am sure by now you are tired of reading letters from people concerning issue #95. After reading the letters section of *DUNGEON* #97, I felt I had to respond.

I am tired of hearing people whine and complain about mature content. In a commercial-driven economy, the

power belongs to the consumer. If there is an issue of *DUNGEON* you do not like, don't buy it! If you don't agree with a sealed section, don't open it. Wizards of the Coast and Paizo Publishing warned everyone in advance of the kind of content the *Book of Vile Darkness* and its supporting literature would contain. There were stickers and warning labels on all the magazines and books.

But the letter I read from Mr. Scott R.C. Smith made me sit down and respond. Mr. Smith was concerned about the mature adventures in the last few issues of *DUNGEON*, in particular the adventure "Pandemonium in the Veins" from issue #96, because it dealt with drug abuse. Mr. Smith didn't feel it was appropriate for his gaming group because he had 12-16-year-olds involved. While I respect Mr. Smith's concern, I would like to point out a possible scenario I do not believe he has considered.

I myself am the father of a twelve-year-old boy. I do feel there are some things that he should not see, at least not until he is older. Drug use is not one of them. Many drug dealers today often target young kids in the hopes of creating life-long addicts. Educating children on the dangers they will face in life prepares them for what's to come. Sheltering them only puts them in harm's way.

My idea for Mr. Smith to consider is, with the parents' permission of course, to use "Pandemonium in the Veins" as a tool to teach the kids about the dangers of drug abuse and addiction. The adventure would be an excellent way to show them just what could happen if you mess with drugs. Even though Mr. Smith found the adventure distasteful, here is a way for it to be educational. Hooray for D&D!

I'd like to finish up by simply saying that I do not wish to offend or criticize anyone, and I didn't mean to single out Mr. Smith. I am, like everyone else, simply stating my opinion.

**Gary W. Hoff**  
Charlotte, NC



GREYHAWK  
A SIDETREK FOR

LOW  
LEVEL

LEVELS 1-5  
WILDERNESS

# GLUTTONY

BY J. BRADLEY SCHELL

ARTWORK BY SCOTT FISCHER • CARTOGRAPHY BY  
CHRISTOPHER WEST

| Magic Items   ➤ Monsters   ♦ NPCs   ♦ Objects   🏰 Settlements   ➤ Traps

"Gluttony" is a D&D Side Trek adventure suitable for four 4th-level characters, although it can easily be modified to present an appropriate challenge for characters of 3rd or 5th level (see "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar). While set in the Flaeness in the world of Greyhawk, "Gluttony" can be placed in an agricultural area with a temperate climate in any campaign world.

## BACKGROUND

Two weeks ago, a great tsunami swept through the Azure Sea. The storm it generated moved across the Amedio Jungle, turned north up the Hellfurnaces, flew across the Sheldomar Valley, and finally dissipated across the northern reaches of the Lortmil Mountains. The ill winds of the fast-moving storm did considerable damage to everything in their path. The storm also swept up two rasts from over the Hellfurnaces and blew them across the great valley, before depositing them in southern Bissel.

The rasts, though somewhat dazed from their rough, windswept journey, saw immediately that they had landed in a place rich with opportunities to slake their thirst for blood. They immediately descended upon a nearby farm and slaughtered the unsuspecting agrarians and their livestock. A fire that had started in the barn during the brief fight spread quickly to the rest of the farm buildings. The rasts, feeling quite welcomed by this fiery display and warmed by their repast, decided to stay and feast until they could eat no more.

Someone else noticed the fire: a cleric of Wee Jas named Knirval Skullstone. Driven from the last small village he stopped at, the dwarven cleric hoped to find more converts—willing or not—in the south of Bissel. On encountering the rasts and watching them gleefully massacre a farms' denizens, Knirval felt he had found a new calling. If the rasts could send a stream of souls to Wee Jas, he could animate the bodies and carve out a small fiefdom to the god of death. Since rasts are nearly insatiable, their continued residence means the eventual death of every living thing in the area, which suits Knirval just fine. He approached the creatures and managed to come to a truce with them, of sorts. He would watch their backs while the fed and lead them to more plentiful feeding grounds in exchange for the bodies of the creatures they killed. Thus far, the rasts have made an excellent start—they have destroyed seven of the farms in the immediate area and slain all witnesses to the attacks.

Those farmers who have not yet been attacked know that something evil is afoot because they have seen the drained and mauled corpses left behind on neighboring farms. Before he was slain himself, one of the farmers—a stocky human named Ruthic—found the bodies of his three pigs slaughtered in their pens, drained of all their blood. As he puzzled over the corpses, one of them stirred and began to rise despite the lack of blood and the horrible bite marks covering its body. Terrified, the farmer fled to his neighbor's land, where he shared the grisly tale.

On returning to the farm a few hours later to investigate (with several cronies in tow), the bodies of the pigs had all vanished. The condition of the bloodless bodies combined with this occurrence has given rise to a wild rumor that a pack of vampires has moved into the area. Holy water, holy symbols, and garlic are now the most popular accouterments of the day among the farmers, but these items offer little protection when the rasts come, as Ruthic discovered only two days later.

The pigs and other missing bodies are rising not as vampires but as zombies. Knirval Skullstone has used the locals' ignorance of undead to encourage the idea of vampires, hoping to drive them off and attract more powerful undead and other worshipers of Wee Jas. The area's farmers, united against the menace under the leadership of Derwin Hornpiper, have offered a 500 gp reward for anyone who can stop the ravaging destroyers.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs are asked to stop the "vampires" that menace the southern farmlands of Bissel. But careful investigation of several attack sites reveals a few details that do not mesh with vampire attacks. The PCs must track down the actual perpetrators and defeat them before they completely devastate the area. Finally, the characters must convince the locals that vampires were not responsible and that the problem is solved.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs can enter the scenario in several ways. The starting point you choose determines which encounter area is used first.

- The PCs themselves discover the rast's most recent work—the destruction of a shepherd and his entire flock (area A).





and have to defeat the shepherd's zombie, as well as three sheep zombies.

- The characters encounter Dervin Hornpiper (area B) while passing through the area and learn of the "vampire" menace.
- While at a local tavern, the PCs hear of the attacks and the undead pigs. If they ask for information, they are directed to Dervin's farm with a firm nod and the following curt statement.

"Over that away lies Dervin Hornpiper's place. He'll tell you about the reward for them vampires. You'll know its his farm 'cause of his symbol on the gate—a ram's horn drilled with finger holes. Stay inside come dark, else they's certain to get ya! Just a little friendly warning—better safe than dead!"

## BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

If you used the first of the adventure hooks above, go to area A first. If you used either of the other two hooks, use area B first.

### A. RAVAGED HERD (EL VARIABLE)

The PCs can get here either by beginning play here (see Adventure Hooks, above) or because Dervin Hornpiper led them here.

A recent storm has ruttled and washed out much of the road, making it very difficult to maintain a swift pace through this pastoral countryside. The land is sparsely populated, occupied for the most part by cattle ranchers, sheep herders, and farmers.

The day has dawned beautifully, and the weather seems to grow more gorgeous with each passing hour. But there in the dark blue, cloudless sky is the first sign of potential danger—a flight of vultures circling over a nearby hilltop.

If the PCs investigate, read or paraphrase the following.

It seems that this windswept hilltop was the site of a recent massacre. Dozens of sheep and a shepherd lie dead here, their stiff, mauled corpses scattered about the meadow like jacks cast by a giant. Despite the grisly remains, however, there is not one speck or trace of blood anywhere in the area—everything looks as if it had been licked clean.

The sheep and their herder are the latest victims of the insatiable rasts. Knirval then animated the shepherd and six of his sheep with his wand of animate dead. Wolves, drawn by the scent of the kill, arrived on the scene later and muddled any trace of Knirval's activities here. They fled to the foot of the hill when the undead began to stir, however.

**Creatures (EL 2):** The zombies have been instructed to lie still until a creature approaches within 10 feet, at which point they shamle to their feet and attack.

➤ **Medium-size Zombie:** hp 16; *Monster Manual* 191.

➤ **Small Zombies (6):** hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 191.

**Tactics:** As mindless undead, the zombies have no real tactics, focusing on one target at a time until it drops or they're reduced to 0 hit points and slain.

**Creatures (EL 5):** The wolves have stayed away from the hilltop, as they dislike the scent of the undead. Once the zombies





fall, they race 40 feet up the hill and attack any remaining PCs, hoping to drive them away and resume their claim on the bodies.

➤ **Wolves (6):** hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 204.

**Tactics:** In combat, 2–3 wolves work together to incapacitate a single opponent before turning on another. The wolves flee after half of their number are slain or incapacitated.

**Development:** Because of the damage the wolves have done to the bodies (before the zombies rose), determining their original condition is difficult. A successful Spot check or Heal check (DC 15) while examining the remains reveals that the attacker had 6-inch-long claws. An additional Heal check (DC 18) reveals that numerous bones in every corpse are shattered. (The condition of the bones is the result of the rasts' habit of dropping their victims from a height.) Finally, another successful Spot or Heal check (DC 20) reveals that the fangs that sucked the corpses dry of blood were at least 8 inches long.

If Dervin (see area B) is with the PCs, he sighs at the sight and asks them to help him gather and burn all the bodies so that the others cannot rise as vampires.

## B. DERVIN HORNPIPER'S FARM

Begin play here if the PCs were drawn into the scenario with the second or third adventure hook (see above). Alternatively, the players can happen upon this farm at any point during the adventure.

Ahead, the road passes by a 9-foot-tall wooden gate. Nailed to the top of it is an enormous ram's horn with finger holes drilled along the top, as if it were an instrument for a bard of gigantic stature. The gate is set in a split-rail wooden fence that encloses a nicely kept stone farmhouse and barn. Attached to every other fencepost is a thick necklace of rotting and fragrant garlic. Three light riding horses graze in the pasture inside the fence, mingling with a dozen head of cattle.

This farm is the home of Dervin Hornpiper, his wife Henrietta, and their two daughters, Willa and Reatha, both of whom are toddlers.

**Creature:** Dervin Hornpiper is a slender human male with dark brown eyes and hair to match. His once-handsome features are now careworn, and his skin has the leathery texture common to those who work outdoors. Dervin reeks of garlic and openly wears a holy symbol of Pelor. He was the first to discover victims of a rast attack—namely his neighbors, the Cornyards. Based on that horrible evidence, the other bodies he has seen, and the undead livestock, Dervin is convinced that vampires are loose in the area.



**Dervin Hornpiper, Male Human Com2:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (5 ft. 7 in.); HD 2d4; hp 5; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11; Atk +1 melee (1d6, quarterstaff); AL NG; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 11.

**Skills:** Handle Animal +5, Listen +2, Profession (farmer) +7, Ride (horse) +6, Spot +2, Swim +1. **Feats:** Simple Weapon Proficiency (quarterstaff), Skill Focus (Profession—farmer).

**Possessions:** Padded armor, quarterstaff, garlic necklace, holy symbol of Pelor, light riding horse, 152 gp, 45 cp.

**Development:** Dervin has been a cattle rancher for more than two decades, and he knows which problems he can cope with and which ones he can't. The recent attacks definitely fall into the latter category, and he's grateful for whatever assistance the PCs can offer. He and the rest of the farmers in the area are offering a 500-gp reward for the capture or death of the killers.

Dervin knows the following facts.

- Seven farms have been attacked and destroyed so far. In every case, the corpses have been drained of blood, and in two cases, livestock or other corpses have been spotted rising from their rest. In each of these situations, the farmers fled, returning only much later to burn the remaining bodies but finding no trace of the bodies that rose as undead.
- When a farm falls victim to the mysterious attacks, every living thing dies—cattle, dogs, cats, farmers, birds—everything.
- The attacks began after the big storm swept through two weeks ago.
- No witnesses to the attacks have survived.

Dervin has some information that could be quite useful to the PCs that he doesn't automatically volunteer. If the PCs ask the right questions or make a successful Gather Information check (DC 15) prompts Dervin to realize that the undead pig sighting happened during the late afternoon, not at night like the second undead encounter. A simple Knowledge (religion) check (DC 5) allows a PC to remember that vampires cannot abide the sun, and in fact can be damaged by it.

Dervin is willing to lead the PCs to the site of the most recent attack (area A) or to any of the destroyed farms, but only during daylight. He refuses to be outdoors at night. If the PCs don't seem suitably equipped to handle vampires, he thrusts some wooden stakes and garlic cloves upon them for their own protection.

## C1–C7. RUINED FARMS

The names of the farmers who lived at the doomed ranches and farms marked on the map are as follows.

- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| C1) Ruthic Ridgefollow | C5) Ossie Goodhallow |
| C2) Davik Cornyard     | C6) Willis Reedlight |
| C3) Red Wingwhip       | C7) Ferrin Brookway  |
| C4) Dollie Dewdrip     |                      |

The remains of these farms are all essentially the same. Use the following description if the PCs visit any of the destroyed farms:

The life has literally been sucked out of this once-thriving farm. Although the evidence suggests that the attack occurred only recently, the farm feels as if it has been abandoned for ages. The only sound is the whistling of the prairie wind across the cultivated land.

In front of the razed farmhouse is a darkened circle of earth at least 20 feet in diameter. The stench of cooked flesh hangs over it like a pall. Nothing remains of the people who formerly inhabited this farm except a few barely recognizable fragments of charred bone and burned debris.

Examination of the remains reveals only that the fires that destroyed these farms occurred within the last two weeks. If Dervin is with the PCs, he explains that he and his fellow farmers burned all the victims and razed their houses so that their spirits would not rise to walk the earth as vampires.

## D. THE RASTS' LAIR (EL 8)

The rasts and their new ally have taken shelter in one of the burned-out farmhouses.

The farmhouse chimney stands like a proud ship's prow against the waves of farmland around it. The horrible odor of burnt wood and flesh still emanates from the cold ashes of this burned-out structure, overlaid by the heavy reek of something fouler. The fire that destroyed this building must have been quite intense, judging from the smoke that still occasionally rises from the ruins. Two 6-foot-diameter mounds of ash and cinder are heaped together inside the burnt remains of a barn next to where the farmhouse stood. A smashed chicken coop appears to be the only unburned structure on the farm. Scattered around the coop are the sad remains of numerous chickens.

The rasts currently nest here because the smoky ruins remind them of their volcanic home. Knirval has camped 30 feet behind the farmhouse, tolerating the surroundings because of his promise to protect the rasts.

**Creatures:** The mated pair of rasts originally came to this plane from the Elemental Plane of Fire through an open portal in one of the volcanoes in the Hellfurnaces. They enjoyed their life at the volcano, flying forth with other rasts that visited the area from time to time to devour what prey they could find. Before they came to Bissel, though, they had never fully slaked their ravenous hunger. Thanks to the great storm, they can now gorge themselves to the bursting point, and they fully intend to do so. Knirval notices any sounds of combat, but takes time to prepare before joining the fray (see **Tactics**, below). He has managed to retain control of two pig zombies from Ruthic's farm. The other zombies he created he let wander free to cause more mayhem and further terrorize the area.

➤ **Rasts (2):** hp 26, 20; *Monster Manual* 154. Unlike typical rasts, both of these creatures are neutral evil in alignment.

◆ **Knirval Skullstone, Male Dwarf Clr5 (Wee Jas):** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (dwarf); HD 5d8+15; hp 42; Init +0;



## SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Gluttony" is intended for a group of four 4th level characters, but it can be modified for parties of either 3rd or 5th level.

**3rd-level PCs:** Run the adventure as written, but with the following adjustments:

- Reduce the number of rasts to one.
- Make Knirval a 4th-level cleric.

**5th-Level PCs:** Run the adventure as written, but with the

following adjustments:

- Add the fiendish template to the two rasts.
- Make Knirval a vampire spawn cleric who is using the rasts as cover while he satiates his own gluttony.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 170 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* (Table: 7-2, 7-3, and 7-4) to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

Spd 15 ft.; AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2, masterwork heavy mace) or +3 ranged (effect varies, ranged touch); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 13.

**Skills:** Concentration +15\*, Knowledge (religion) +9, Spellcraft +9. **Feats:** Combat Casting, Lightning Reflexes.

\*Includes +4 bonus from Combat Casting.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Ignan.

**Possessions:** cloak of resistance +1, wand of animate dead (8 charges), potion of cure serious wounds, masterwork half plate, masterwork heavy mace, large steel shield, five onyx gems (50 gp each).

**Spells Prepared** (4/5/4/3; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, mending; 1st—cause fear\*, cure light wounds ×2, random action, shield of faith; 2nd—bull's strength, death knell\*, hold person, spiritual weapon; 3rd—animate dead\*, dispel magic, searing light.

\*Domain Spell. **Domains:** Death (death touch 1/day), Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level).

➤ **Medium Zombie Pigs** (2): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 191.

**Tactics:** The rasts typically fly out after dark and attack the first farm they find. After feeding, they return to their lair for about 36 hours to digest the meal. After that, they wait until dark and then fly out and attack again.

In combat, each rast takes advantage of its ability to fly, swooping to within 30 feet of an opponent and using its paralyzing gaze to freeze the intended victim in place. It then grabs

the opponent (with a successful melee touch attack) and attempts to fly away with it to a safer location, where it can drain blood in peace. Once the victim has been completely drained of blood (Con 0) or begins to struggle, the rast drops it, then attacks again with its paralyzing gaze.

Unless paralyzed, a PC can attempt to avoid being dropped by grabbing onto the rast with a successful opposed grapple check (see *Player's Handbook*, page 137) that provokes an attack of opportunity.

The rast flies only 30 feet above the ground when attacking, believing itself safe at that height. Neither rast fights to the death; the creatures know they can find easier prey on some other farm. They flee when reduced to half hit points or less.

Knirval takes a few rounds to get into a fight. He casts *bull's strength* and *shield of faith* on himself from behind the rubble of the farmhouse. Once he joins the battle, Knirval hangs back from melee, although he has no fear of battle, and uses his spells effectively (trying to finish off a foe with *searing light* or casting *hold person* on a PC who looks weak-willed). When the rasts flee, Knirval is quite surprised. He intended to keep his end of the bargain and is shocked when the rasts don't. He doesn't fear death, though, and fights until dropped below 0 hit points.

**Treasure:** While the rasts have no treasure, the life savings of the farmer who once lived here is untouched. Hidden in the remains of the barn is a small unlocked iron box (Search DC 15). Inside it are 35 pp, 150 gp, two gems (100 gp each), and an



by Aaron Williams  
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old family heirloom—a pearl of power (1st-level).

**Development:** Searching the ruins of the house reveals the burnt corpses of the farmer and his family, which the rasts tossed back into the fire after sucking them dry and Knirval intended to animate shortly. The rasts also destroyed the chicken coop in their attempts to get at the hens inside. The bodies of the chickens are bloodless and shredded.

## CONCLUSION

If the PCs let the rasts get away, the creatures destroy another farm in the region a few days later. If the PCs kill the rasts and present the heads to Dervin Hornpiper, they can claim the reward, although it might take a few minutes and a successful opposed Diplomacy check to convince him that the rasts were really the source of the menace. Thereafter, the PCs always find warm and welcome hospitality in this area.

Slaying the rasts doesn't have to be the end of the adventure. The great storm could have flooded out deep caverns in the nearby Lortmil Mountains, forcing evil humanoids or a ravenous hydra that once lived there to seek a new home. Perhaps the great storm that brought the rasts wasn't a natural phenomenon, and the insane druid who caused it plans to send more such magical weather across the Sheldomar Valley to wash away the "taint of civilization." If not stopped, he could threaten all the agriculture in the valley. Finally, Knirval left some uncontrolled zombies wandering the area. Tracking them all down could be quite a chore, and if some other dark-hearted necromancer discovered and controlled them, he or she might pose as great a threat to the region as did Knirval.  $\Omega$

Brad Schell's deadly sins adventures have nearly come full circuit. The "series" began with "Rage" in issue #89, followed by "Sloth" in issue #91, "Vanity" in issue #93, "Lust" in #95, and now "Gluttony" in this issue. That leaves only envy and greed to go, coming soon to a DUNGEON near you.

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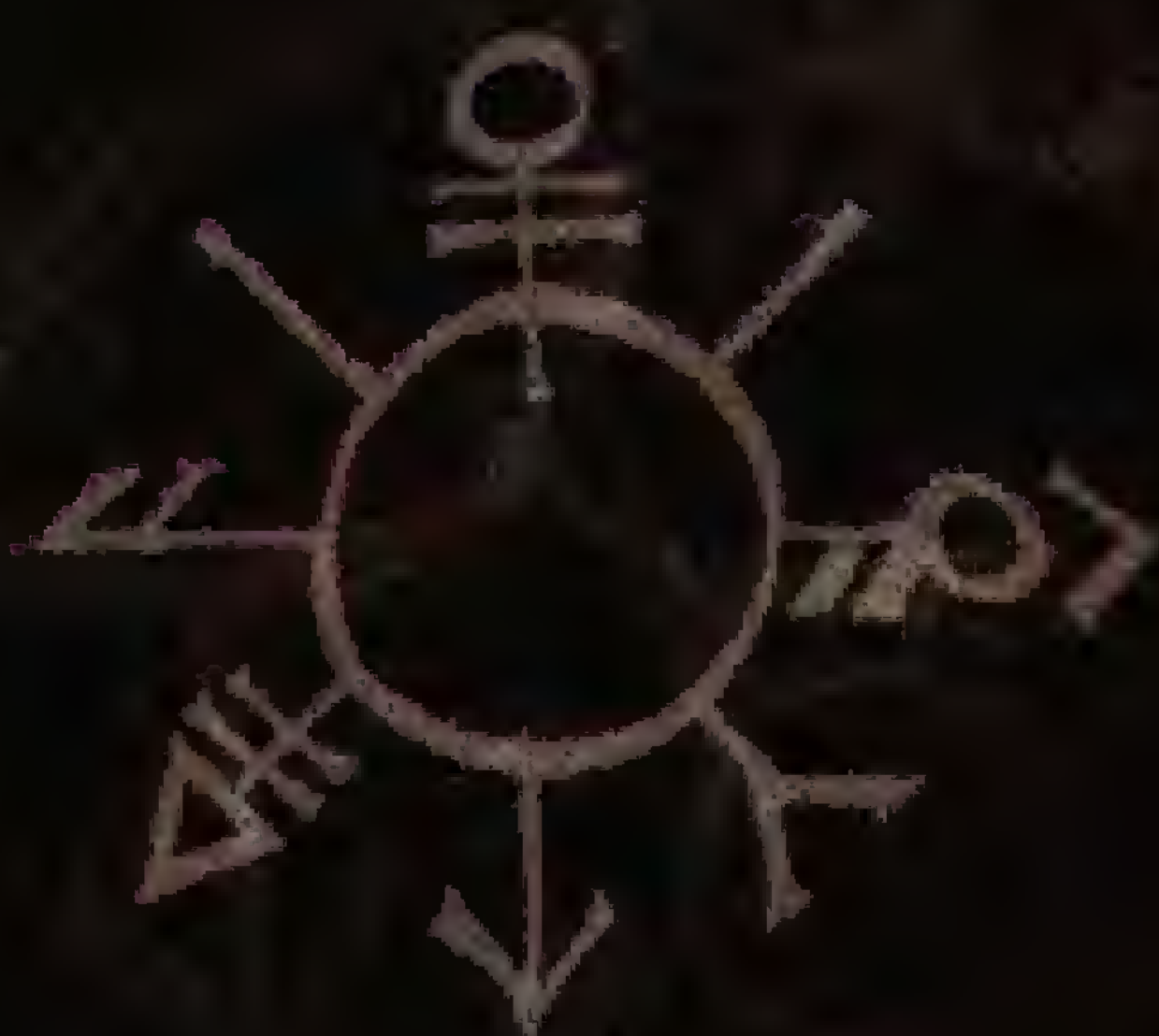
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# WINGS, SPIKES, AND TEETH

BY BRIAN MARSDEN

ARTWORK BY RICHARD SARDINHA • CARTOGRAPHY BY PETER WHITLEY

† Magic Items ➤ Monsters ✦ NPCs ◆ Objects 👑 Settlements ↗ Traps

"Wings, Spikes, and Teeth" is a D&D Side Trek that can be used in most any non-urban environment. Intended for adventurers of 8th level, it can be adapted for different groups using the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar. The adventure takes place in a mountainous region as the party travels along a trail.

## BACKGROUND

An old mantichore of the nearby mountains named Hildrar was recently forced out of his position of dominance as leader of a large mantichore pride. Hildrar put up a brave fight against the young challenger, but he was forced to abandon his territory after the rival shredded his wings. Wounded and unable to fly, the old mantichore limped out of the mountains to the valleys below, beaten but not defeated. After his wounds mostly healed—Hildrar's wings never fully recovered—he encountered a small pride of lions and quickly assumed supremacy of the pride by defeating the lions' powerful dire lion leader.

As leader of the lion pride, Hildrar has led the lions to the fringes of civilization in pursuit of his favorite food: humanoids. The pride has been roaming the mountain passes and trails in search of wayward travelers.

The former pride leader, a dire lion of similar strength, still follows the pride but has become Hildrar's whipping boy. His sides show the scars of the mantichore's frequent abuse. Hildrar seeks to keep the dire lion from being a threat to his leadership, but he keeps the cowed lion around for the added muscle.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Hildrar has set up an ambush point on a seldom-used route into the mountains, along a trail that follows a stream through a slender canyon. The rocky slopes of the valley make it difficult to climb and keeps prey boxed in. The lions and mantichore are hidden at the start of the adventure, waiting the former pride leader's roar to warn them of approaching victims.

The dire lion waits a half-mile up the road. He lets the passers-by into the valley and up the trail. He then alerts the others with a roar before following the party into the trap at a non-threatening distance (out of bowshot). The mantichore and lions attack when someone advances onto the bridge.

However, the dire lion leader is not happy in his new role. He chases the party forward only half-heartedly; if approached by the PCs in the right manner and with the right spells (such as *Speak with Animals*), he can be talked into fighting the mantichore. In this case, he follows the party to the ambush point and after Hildrar attacks, the dire lion turns on the mantichore.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

The adventure set up is simple. If you desire, you could develop it into a more complex encounter. For instance, the PCs might have heard rumors of a fierce creature roaming the trails nearby (Gather Information, DC 10). The locals don't know what is happening beyond that. Hildrar has been diligent in his attacks, careful never to leave survivors. The only forewarning the commoners in the area can provide is that they haven't seen any of the trappers that hunt the mountains in quite some time. A local adds that he has heard faint roars echoing from the canyons late at night. Most people think they're just his imagination.

A Gather Information check (DC 15) reveals that lion tracks were reported by one villager, but the discovery of one or two tracks and even seeing a lion is not that unusual here. They haven't caused trouble for anything but sheep in the past.

## BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The PCs wander up the trail toward the ambush point. The canyon narrows here, and a small 3-foot-deep pool forms where a streamlet from higher in the mountains joins the main stream. Although both streams are easy enough to walk across, a small bridge made from tree trunks spans the stream so carts can





WINGS, SPIKES,  
AND TEETH

move more easily. The walls are not steep, and fairly easy for the lions to scale (Climb, DC 15).

## 1. THE TAIL OF THE ENCOUNTER (ENCOUNTER LEVEL 5+)

You enter a narrow rift between two rocky mountain walls. The trail follows a stream that tumbles along at a moderate pace; it is less than 15 feet wide and no more than a foot deep. The angled canyon walls would be a challenge to climb, but they are not very steep. Both sides of the canyon are covered with scattered trees that gently shake in the canyon's trapped breeze. The babbling of the brook and the gentle rustling of the trees makes for a pleasant journey.

Up the trail, you can see a small makeshift bridge of tree trunks crossing an adjoining streamlet, which tumbles down from a waterfall 20 feet from the trail. A small shallow pond to the right of the bridge has been formed by the fall of several trees on the other side of the stream.

Over the background noise of the tranquil scene you suddenly hear a roar echo off the rocks of the canyon. The hairs on your neck stand up as you spot a lion 300 feet behind you, seated upon a rock 30 feet up the side of the wall.

The lion rises from his perch, giving you a good idea of his size. He appears to be at least 6 feet tall. His ochre hide shows highlights of darker spots, especially on his flanks. As the majesty of this animal sinks in, he lets loose another roar, staring defiantly directly at you.

The dire lion is the former pride leader. If the PCs do not attack, neither does the lion. He does his part to encourage them into the ambush by cutting off their retreat. As the party starts up the trail, the lion stalks them at a distance of 150 feet. If approached (by a ranger or druid, for example), a successful Handle Animal check (DC 20) convinces the lion to deal with the PCs (casting *speak with animals* or a similar spell before trying to engage the lion in this manner provides a +6 circumstance bonus to this check). The dire lion's attitude toward the PCs is unfriendly; toward rangers and druids he is indifferent. PCs who approach within 30 feet see many wounds—old and new—covering the lion's body.

➔ **Former Pride Leader, Advanced Dire Lion:** CR 5<sup>\*</sup>; Large Animal; HD 16d8+48; hp 118 (currently 38); Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13; BAB +12; Grap +23; Atk +18 melee (2 claws, 1d6+7), +13 melee (bite, 1d8+3); Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SA pounce, improved grab, rake 1d6+3; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +6; Str 25, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Skills:** Hide +5<sup>\*\*</sup>, Jump +10, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +4.

<sup>\*\*</sup>In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the dire lion's Hide bonus improves to +8.

**Tactics:** If the party gives the lion no reason to help them, he waits and either joins the fray later (1d6+2 rounds after the ambush starts—see area 2) or picks off an available mount as the party retreats from the fight. Should the party attack the beast, he fights to the death.



**Development:** If someone in the party can speak to him, the lion reluctantly tells them to go back but doesn't elaborate. A successful Sense Motive check (DC 25) allows the PC to tell that the lion seems nervous. With effort, the animal's reaction can be swayed. In addition to Diplomacy checks, Animal Empathy or Handle Animal checks can also be used to sway the dire lion's reaction. See **Tables 5-3** and **5-4** in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* (page 149) for details. If the lion's attitude moves to friendly, he says that his pride now thinks of humans as food and that the characters should go back the way they came. If the lion becomes helpful, and the characters ask the right questions, he mentions that a new pride leader—a powerful, strange lion—has led the other lions to hunt this pass. The dire lion does not like the taste of humans, and admits that the rest of the pride is unhappy with the new pride leader.

If *charmed* or *dominated*, the lion tells the PCs about his rivalry with the new leader, but not about the ambush. Note that the lion cannot identify or accurately describe a mantichore. At best, he can describe it as a flying lion that can bite from afar. He can be persuaded to attack Hildrar, but only if the PCs aid him. He also insists that the party try to spare his fellow lions and allow them to flee back into the mountains.

**Ad-hoc Experience Award:** Award the PCs 100% more experience for defeating the former pride leader. Additionally, if the characters deal with the lion peacefully, award them experience as if they had defeated him in combat.

## 2. AFTER THE ROAR (EL 8)

Six lions stalk the party on the other side of the stream, which they can easily leap.

➤ **Lion (6):** hp 32 each; *Monster Manual* 198.

Until the trap is sprung, the lions hide (Spot, DC 40, to detect them) while trying to remain within striking distance. The lions automatically Spot the characters at a distance of 100 feet (roughly 20 feet after the former pride leader's perch) unless the PCs attempt to be stealthy, in which case the lions need to make Spot checks with a -2 penalty since they keep their heads down to avoid detection.

**Tactics:** The lions wait for the mantichore to spring the trap, joining 1 round later. Like the former pride leader, they are new

to hunting humans. If the PCs are accompanied by animals, there is a 30% chance that each lion attacks one of these creatures with its first attack. Because they wait for the mantichore to attack first, none of their victims is likely to be flat-footed.

## 3. THE LEDGE (EL 8)

Hildrar waits on the ledge over the falls (Spot, DC 30, to detect it). The mantichore bellows the attack signal when the PCs come within 80 feet of the dire lions' hiding place (placing the characters within charge distance of the lions).

Another loud roar booms from the rocky mountainside over the trail. Debris fluffs up into the sky as a huge creature springs into the air from a ledge above. It glides in an awkward spiral on tattered wings. The beast's humanlike, bestial face eyes you as it begins to circle down. The beast then whips its long tail. A volley of bone-white spikes fly from its tail and streak toward you.

➤ **Hildrar, Advanced Mantichore:** CR 5\*; Huge Magical Beast; HD 15d10+60; hp 120; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft.\*\*; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 14; BAB +15; Grap +28; Atk +19 melee (2d4+5, 2 claws), +17 melee (1d8+2, bite), or +16 ranged (1d8+2/crit 19–20, spikes); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.; SA spikes, rake (1d4+2); SQ scent; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 10.

\*\*Hildrar can't fly, per se. Due to his tattered wings, the mantichore can only glide for short distances equal to his fly speed (50 feet). Gliding in this manner is a move action. Hildrar can still clear obstacles up to 50 feet in height by jumping and using his wings to aid the elevation gain, and the mantichore never takes falling damage (he uses his wings to slow his descent) unless he can't use his wings. Hildrar can still dive (charge from the air), and he can double move through the air in two long hops if he can find some place to land between move actions.

**Skills:** Listen +9, Spot +9<sup>1</sup>. **Feats:** Multiattack, Power Attack, Improved Critical (spikes).

<sup>1</sup>Manticores receive a +4 racial bonus to Spot checks in daylight.

## SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Wings, Spikes, and Teeth" is intended for four 8th-level PCs, but it can be easily adapted for parties of different levels or sizes. You can also set the adventure in a different type of terrain. Just retain a high vantage point for Hildrar's perch, an area of underbrush or high grass where the lions wait for prey, and another high point that the former pride leader uses to watch for passers-by.

You can also consider modifying the adventure as follows:

- **5th- to 7th-level PCs:** The former pride leader's HD should be reduced nearer to his default level of 8 HD. A good rule of thumb is to give him twice as many HD as the party's average level (so 10 HD for a 5th-level party). Hildrar's HD should also be reduced for a lower-level or

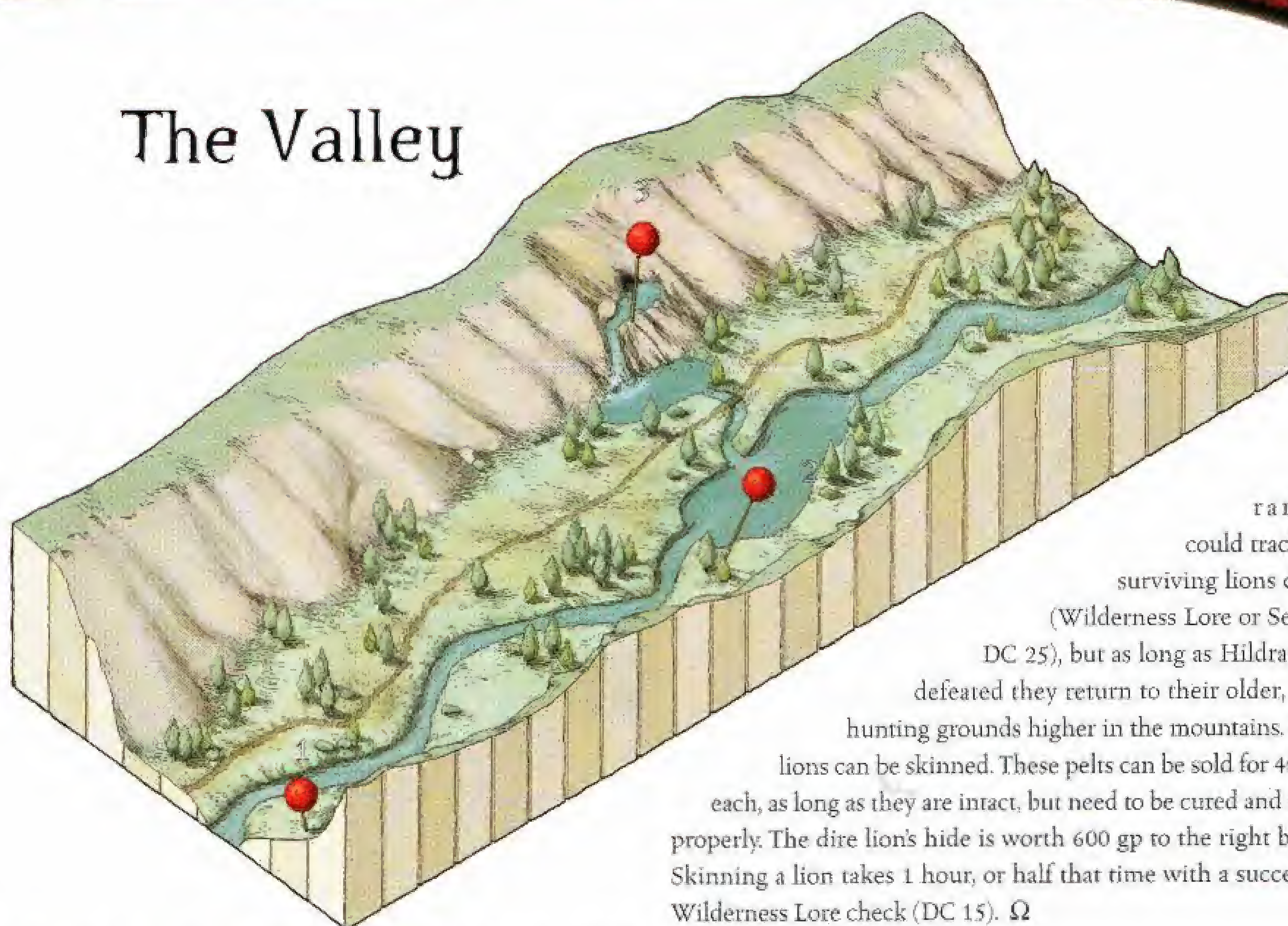
smaller group. Again, his HD should be roughly twice the party's average level.

- **9th- to 12th-level PCs:** Make Hildrar an 18-HD Gargantuan mantichore. This increases his Strength, Constitution, attack bonus, saves, hit points, natural armor, and adds a feat; this also reduces his Dexterity and increases the size-based attack and AC modifier. Increase the dire lion's HD to keep him roughly twice the party's average level. Also, either add more lions to the ambush (area 2), make the lions normal dire lions, or a combination of both.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 170 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* (Tables 7-2, 7-3, and 7-4) to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.



# The Valley



**Tactics:** The manticore fights to the death. The lions retreat after dropping below 20% of their hit points or if Hildrar is killed. If the former pride leader fights for the characters, the lions only fight until reduced to 50% of their hit points or Hildrar is slain, whichever comes first. If present, the dire lion fights Hildrar until slain.

As soon as a party member gets on the bridge, Hildrar glides down in that direction, letting loose a volley of spikes as it goes. Hildrar continues to glide and leap around the area, using tail spikes as long as no PC poses a serious ranged threat. Such characters are always Hildrar's first targets. When it runs out of tail spikes, the manticore dives (a vertical charge) at the PC nearest the bridge.

**Ad-hoc Experience Award:** The PCs should earn 150% more experience for defeating Hildrar, due to the manticore's advanced statistics.

## 4. HILDRAR'S LAIR

Hildrar has made a temporary lair in an alcove atop the ledge. It is strewn with the bones of two humans. In a corner, Hildrar hides his **Treasure** in a concealed pit (Search, DC 20) beneath a heavy boulder (Strength check, DC 20, to move).

**Treasure:** In a foul-smelling leather sack in the hole, the PCs find 15 pp, 167 gp, a potion of ghoul touch, and a +2 lion's shield. A Search check (DC 25) in the pit reveals 10 red spinels (100 gp each) scattered in a loose layer of dirt at the pit's bottom.

## CONCLUSION

If the party defeats Hildrar and the lions (either through combat or by helping the former pride leader take back his place of authority) they can take the manticore's treasure, assuming they find it. A

ranger could track the surviving lions down (Wilderness Lore or Search, DC 25), but as long as Hildrar was defeated they return to their older, safer hunting grounds higher in the mountains. Slain lions can be skinned. These pelts can be sold for 400 gp each, as long as they are intact, but need to be cured and dried properly. The dire lion's hide is worth 600 gp to the right buyer. Skinning a lion takes 1 hour, or half that time with a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15). Ω

Brian Marsden is a 17-year-veteran gamer and GM. He resides in Colorado where he works on a CIS degree in order to better support his fantasy roleplaying habits and ambitions.

## OOPS!

We forgot to include the author bios for the adventures in issue #97. Our apologies to all our authors and those readers hungry for personal tidbits on their favorite D&D module writers.

**HANK WOON, JR.** lives in Aberdeen, WA and has played DUNGEONS & DRAGONS for over a decade now, mostly as the DM. His main inspiration for "Demonblade" are ancient tales of artifact possession. I've always been intrigued by the thought of a disembodied soul trapped for eternity, searching for a host so it can be released from its tomb.

**CAMPBELL PENTNEY** is a 4th-level student/0-level lawyer from New Zealand who has been DMing for eleven years. He can usually be found slaving away at the gym (attempting to maintain his hold on his current world record for push-ups) or sitting in the law school library with a confused look on his face.

**ROB MANNING** says, "I would like to dedicate this adventure to Dickinson, Harris, and Dianno; Stanley, Frehley, Simmons, and Criss; Lynott, Gorham, and Robertson; Pinnick, Tabor, and Gaskill; Lennon and McCartney; DeGarmo and Tate; and Ronnie James Dio. He'd also like to thank Moore, Miller, Gaiman, Morrison, Ennis, Ellis, Lapham, Gerber, Busiek, Waid, Robinson, Loeb."

**CHRIS PERKINS** runs a spectacular Wednesday night D&D game that is deeply immersive, wonderfully rich in detail, and a true inspiration to DMs everywhere. This sentiment is brought to you by an editor who's hoping his brown nosing is good for a few extra XPs this week and the number 9.









# FLOOD SEASON

BY JAMES JACOBS

ARTWORK BY STEPHEN DANIELE, PETER BERGTING, AND  
SCOTT FISCHER • CARTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER WEST

| Magic Items   ➤ Monsters   ♦ NPCs   ♦ Objects   🏰 Settlements   ⚡ Traps

"Flood Season" is the second module in the *DUNGEON Magazine Adventure Path: Shackled City* series. This *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* adventure is designed for four player characters (PCs) of 4th level. PCs who survive the entire adventure should advance to or near 6th level, depending on how many encounters they overcome, and how many they manage to circumvent.

This adventure can easily accommodate larger groups of PCs, and it can handle parties of 1st through 3rd level, or even up to 7th level once a few adjustments are made (see the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar).

When the PCs obtain sufficient experience points to advance to their next level, allow them to advance during the course of the adventure; some of the challenges that await them toward the end of this adventure are fairly dangerous.

The events in "Flood Season" should take place after those detailed in the previous adventure in this series, "Life's Bazaar," from issue #97. The text of the adventure assumes this, but if you run "Flood Season" as a standalone adventure, it should be relatively simple to alter descriptions to compensate. If your group has played through the previous adventure, they should be of sufficient level to start this one. If they are still mostly 3rd level, you might wish to run a shorter adventure first so that they can stand up to the challenges presented in this module.

## PREPARATION

Before you run "Flood Season," you should have a copy of the three core rulebooks (the *Player's Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*). This adventure also features creatures from *Monster Manual II* and the *Fiend Folio*; pertinent statistical information for these monsters is presented in the text where appropriate or included in the "Flood Season" Web enhancement, although it is strongly recommended that you reference the appropriate books for more details on the creatures in question.

Scattered throughout the adventure are Campaign Seed sidebars. These sidebars contain hints and plots about the campaign that might surface in future installments of the series, but which aren't necessarily pertinent to this adventure. These sidebars are meant to introduce future allies and adversaries and help you keep track of the campaign's "movers and shakers."

## BACKGROUND

The large town of Cauldron is unlike any other. Built inside the mouth of a dormant volcano, Cauldron is secretly ruled by a beholder named Vhalantru who hides behind the guise of an influential noble named Orbius Vhalantru. Vhalantru controls various members of the town guard, nobility, and merchants with his magic, all while keeping a presence in the various illegal ventures that take place inside the city walls. No one is the wiser, at this point.

Recently, the city was hit by a sudden string of kidnappings. The victims ranged across the board in appearance: men, women, humans, halflings, elves, dwarves, seniors, children, merchants, rogues. Nothing seemed to tie the crimes together, aside from the fact that they all occurred over a relatively short period. The kidnappings were in fact orchestrated by a slave trader from the Underdark. Named Kazmojen, this slaver used his minions to snatch victims from the streets of Cauldron, until his plans were finally thwarted by adventurers working at the behest of the Church of St. Cuthbert. This adventure, "Life's Bazaar," is detailed in *DUNGEON Magazine* issue #97.

Since these events transpired, life has returned to normal in the city. As winter draws closer, the citizens of Cauldron are busy shoring up their homes and businesses in preparation for the flood season. Since the city is essentially built inside a large bowl, the rainy seasons of winter are dangerous. The mouth of the dormant volcano catches the falling rain with great efficiency, and the gutters of Cauldron quickly become filled with turbulent rivers that more often than not overflow into the streets as they drain down the inner surface of the volcano and into the central lake. Most years, the rainfall quickly overcomes the lake's natural drainage into the Underdark, and the water level slowly creeps up, flooding the lower buildings and forcing the inhabitants to flee for higher ground. Since the buildings along the lakeshore tend to be poorly constructed and their inhabitants poor, sick, and destitute, the damage done by these yearly floods can be devastating.

After a particularly wet winter several decades ago, when the central lake's waters reached Ash Avenue and completely submerged many of the lower buildings, the city decided to do something about the problem. Representatives of the churches





Cauldron Cross-Section



Last year, a drought caused a late and exceptionally mild winter, so no one really noticed or complained that dangerously few *wands of control water* were built. In fact, the wands weren't even used except at the start and end of the flood season as part of festival ceremonies. As a result, the long-standing alliance between the four temples has faded. The church of Kord has long balked at the cost of building the

of Pelor, Wee Jas, and Kord got together under the urging of the then high priestess of the church of St. Cuthbert, pooled their resources, and created several *wands of control water* to combat the next flood season. That winter, priests from these four temples patrolled the lower streets of Cauldron and fought back the flood using their wands. The citizens were grateful for the aid, and assisted with sandbagging and shoring of buildings where they could; even with the magic wands, the flood waters could still do significant damage.

So successful were these measures that, after that flood season ended, the city of Cauldron erupted into a massive festival. In the years to follow, this grew into a tradition. The Flood Festival, as it came to be known, began earlier each year until it started before the first rains fell. Each year, the priests of the city created *wands of control water* to fight the floods, and each year the floods were controlled and blunted. For a few years, they even dabbled with scrolls of *control weather*, but this option was abandoned before long because too many mishaps cropped up when lower-level clerics miscast these powerful spells.

But time breeds contentment, and the Flood Festival ended up too successful for its own good. As the years went by, the churches began to refine their uses of the wands and found that they could build fewer wands and still make it through the season. At the same time, the festivals grew more gaudy and extravagant. Over the past decade, the winters have been fairly mild, and it is doubtful that the lake would have flooded even if its waters weren't held back. As the apparent need for protection faded, so did the city's memories of the floods of decades past, and the need for the *wands of control water* began to slip.

wands, and this year its priesthood has turned its focus to the Flood Festival itself, organizing numerous sporting events to entertain the city. The church of Wee Jas would rather spend their efforts creating "more constructive magic items," and they too have dropped from the wand-creating program (this temple has been the least supportive of the program overall). The church of Pelor, although still supportive of the program, has relatively small presence in Cauldron, and last spring it lost its two most powerful priests to a tragic accident. No current member of the clergy has the expertise to build *wands of control water*.

That leaves the church of St. Cuthbert. Sarcem Delasharn, the current high priest of the temple, grew worried. He couldn't make enough wands himself for the festival, and certainly didn't think that the calm winters Cauldron had witnessed over the past decade would last much longer. He collected what funds he could (mostly from his own church, but some gathered from the other churches) and kept the wand shortage as low key and secret as he could; he didn't want to distress the populace any more than necessary. He then set out from Cauldron on a long trek to the distant capital city (using the approach of important annual St. Cuthbert rituals as a public excuse to make the trip) to purchase or commission as many *wands of control water* as he could afford. It was a long task, requiring him to be absent from Cauldron for many weeks. In his absence he named Jenya Urikas as the acting high priestess of St. Cuthbert in Cauldron.

Unfortunately, something far more sinister and dangerous than floods is brewing in the shadows of Cauldron.



## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The party, after spending some time recovering from their latest adventures, is contacted by a distraught Jenya Urikas, the acting high priestess of the Church of St. Cuthbert. She has just received a disturbing sending spell from Sarcem Delasharn. Hed been ambushed at the Lucky Monkey, and he and a few survivors had managed to hole up in the tavern's basement. It was apparent that the aggressors would soon get in and finish the job. The Lucky Monkey is an inn just a day's travel outside Cauldron, and Jenya begs the party to ride to the roadhouse to try to save Sarcem and any other survivors.

The party hurries out to the roadhouse at the base of the volcano, only to find the site terribly quiet. After they begin to explore, they quickly learn that the ambushers are still looting the inn. They must drive off the bandits, who are led by a werababoon named Tongueater. If they're quick, they can rescue the one survivor of the attack on the Lucky Monkey: a female half-drow named Shensen. She is a member of the Striders of Fharlanghn, a neutrally aligned organization with several agents in the area. The Striders are detailed in the Web enhancement for "Life's Bazaar," available at [www.paizo.com/dungeon](http://www.paizo.com/dungeon).

Unfortunately, they are too late for the inn patrons, including Sarcem Delasharn. They can recover his body and return with Shensen to Cauldron, whereupon they can piece together the events at the inn and find out what might have happened to the *wands of control water*, which are desperately needed as the rains begin to fall in earnest. After a bit of investigation, the

group learns that Tongueater was merely the cohort of a more powerful villain named Triel Eldurast, an ex-member of the Cauldron city guard who fled into the catacombs below the city many years ago after she murdered several of her fellow guards. Triel led the attack on the Lucky Monkey and left her cohort Tongueater behind to finish the job as she fled back to Cauldron with the stolen *wands of control water*. After more investigation (set against the backdrop of increasing rain and rapidly rising floodwaters), the group finds clues that her base of operation seems to be in a large hidden cavern below town.

Access to this cavern is possible via a lengthy underwater swim (a lake in the cavern is connected underwater to the central lake of Cauldron), or via a lava tube that connects the cavern with a secret opening on the northern slope of the volcano. Arriving at the hidden cave, the party finds that it contains the crumbling ruins of several stone buildings . . . the last few remnants of an ancient city of a sinister race of creatures known as the kopru. Worse, it seems that Triel Eldurast has become a cleric of Hextor and allied herself with two other religious zealots. One is a halfling Vecna cultist named Skaven Umbermead, and the other is an undead gnoll cultist of Erythnul. They intend to ransom off the stolen wands to the city above, and even intended to use some of them to worsen the flooding as necessary to provoke a more urgent need for them. The party must retrieve the wands and put a stop to the cultists (who work for even more powerful and mysterious masters) before Cauldron suffers extensive flood damage.

## SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Flood Season" is designed for a group of four 4th-level characters, but with a little work it can be adapted for use by 1st–3rd, or even 5th–7th-level characters.

- For lower-level characters, the easiest way to scale the adventure is to simply reduce the number of thugs and Alleybashers the party must encounter. In the Lucky Monkey, several of the bandits might have passed out from too much drink, and in the Kopru Ruins they might be even more inattentive or sleepy than usual. You should reduce the character levels of the major NPCs by one or two levels to compensate as well, and if the PCs still need help, perhaps Shensen or a friendly NPC from "Life's Bazaar" agrees to temporarily join up with the group. Certain creatures should be replaced with less powerful creatures as indicated below:

**Skulvyn:** Replace with a fiendish crocodile.

**Kopru:** Eliminate the kopru encounter altogether.

**Mud Slaad:** Replace it with a few dretches.

**Spiders:** Reduce the size categories of all monstrous spiders encountered by one.

**Ettercaps:** Replace with goblins or kobolds.

**Harpoon Spider:** Replace with a Medium half-dragon monstrous spider.

**T-Rex Skeleton:** Replace with a Huge T-rex skeleton.

**Spawn of Kyuss:** Replace with ghouls or ghasts.

**Traps:** Remove all traps of CR 4 or higher.

- For higher-level characters, the simplest way to increase the challenge level is to add NPC levels to the monsters for each level above 4th that the PCs are when they start the adventure. You can also add creatures to the encounter areas to make things more difficult, or perhaps many of the miscellaneous creatures in the Kopru Ruins are fiendish or half-fiends provided by the cultists' benefactors. Some specific examples might include:

**Hill Baboons:** Have some or all of these baboons replaced by 1st-level fighters with the werababoon template.

**Skulvyn:** Advance the skulvyn's Hit Dice by a few levels.

**Kopru:** Give the kopru a few levels of rogue, cleric, or sorcerer.

**Mud Slaad:** Add a second or even a third mud slaad.

**Spiders:** Apply the half-dragon template to the spiders, ettercaps, and harpoon spider.

**T-Rex Skeleton:** Replace with an equal-sized zombie.

**Spawn of Kyuss:** Replace with mummies or mohrgs.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 170 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* (Tables 7–2, 7–3, and 7–4) to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.





## CAULDRON

The city of Cauldron is detailed more fully in "Life's Bazaar" from issue #97. The information presented here should allow you to run "Flood Season."

The town's buildings, tightly packed and built from volcanic rock and wood, line the inner bowl of a nameless, dormant volcano. Cobblestone roads form concentric circles around a small lake of cold water, which fills the volcano's basin. Although the town's sewage seeps into the lake, local clerics

provide purified water to citizens in exchange for charitable donations to their temples.

A 50-foot-tall fortified wall of black malachite encircles the city, tracing the outer rim of the volcano. Four roads descend the outer walls of the volcano, becoming major thoroughfares that lead to other towns and distant realms.

Most people get around Cauldron on foot, although the town has its share of wagons and carriages, most of them owned by merchants and nobles.

## CAMPAIGN SEED: THE EBON TRIAD

Although it might not become clear to the PCs, the cultists who lurk in the Kopru Ruins belong to a secret cult known as the Ebon Triad. This cult has small cells operating throughout the region and was founded recently by a small group of heretics from the churches of Erythnul, Vecna, and Hextor. They believe that through cooperation, they can merge the power of their three deities into one overdeity of extreme and unimaginable power. The Ebon Triad has allied itself with the Cagewrights, a faction of sinister villains with dire plans for the Cauldron region (detailed further in both "Life's Bazaar" and the "Flood Season" Web enhancement), and many Ebon Triad cells are hard at work building magic devices called *Soulcages* for them.

The official churches of Erythnul, Vecna, and Hextor are

less than pleased with the foundation of the Ebon Triad. Tradition and belief have always kept these three churches at odds with one another, and the majority of these faithful have no wish to see the glory and power of their patron deity "diluted" through mixing with "lesser" religions. The fact that their deities continue to grant spells to the cultists of the Ebon Triad is vexing and disturbing to the traditionalists, and before long these three evil churches might launch programs to put down the upstart cultists before their radical ideas gain too many more followers. The PCs might even find themselves working for clerics of Erythnul, Vecna, or Hextor in a quest to eradicate some of the Ebon Triad cults. One thing is certain, though: with the support of the Cagewrights, the Ebon Triad represents a very serious threat to the Cauldron region.



## Cauldron Rumors

### d12 Rumor

1 The Flood Festival is a front, founded years ago by a cult of Hextor to fund a secret army of bloodthirsty mercenaries hidden in caverns below the city. (False.)

2 More giant snakes have been sighted near the village of Hollowsky to the east. I bet the yuan-ti of Shatterhorn are back! (This rumor could be true or false, but its implications are beyond the scope of this adventure.)

3 A pesky tribe of kobolds used to infest some of the catacombs below the southern section of the city, but they've been taken care of now. (True; the kobolds were wiped out several months ago by an adventuring group called "The Stormblades." More information about this group can be found in the "Flood Season" Web enhancement.)

4 Someone in Cauldron trades in strange currency: coins stamped with a jester instead of the sovereign. The authorities are trying to find the source. (True; The Last Laugh guild in town mints its own coins.)

5 A tentacled beast lurks in the cold depths of the lake (True; a powerful morkoth makes its home there.)

6 Something's been riling up wild animals in the area for the last several months; in particular, the lowland baboons seem to have become particularly hostile lately. (True; a large number of lycanthropes have started to appear in the area, one of which the PCs encounter at the Lucky Monkey.)

7 Alek Tercival, a paladin who serves St. Cuthbert, has been out of town for several days; I hear he traveled to the village of Redgorge to take care of a woman who was possessed by a demon! (False; there are no demonic possessions in Redgorge, but Alek Tercival has indeed been out of town for nearly a week.)

8 Hookface the dragon was spotted flying over the hills to the north by some adventurers—hope they don't go rile him up! (False; Hookface has not emerged from his lair to the north in nearly a hundred years.)

9 A friend saw a mysterious woman down by the lakeshore a few days ago. She had fiery red hair and wore some sort of bulky armor under a black tabard. She was talking to some shady looking individuals and handing them some money and weapons. (True; This was Triel Eldurast hiring more thugs and Alleybashers to help with her plans.)

10 Some sort of evil aquatic druid from the Underdark has taken up residence in the lake, and it's planning on casting a spell to lure people into the water to transform them into its monstrous minions! (False.)

11 Cauldron's not the first city to be built on this site. Adventurers tell stories of a ruined city in the caverns below, a city built by a strange race of aquatic monsters. (True; this was once the site of a kopru city.)

12 The churches have lost the *wands of control water*. There's nothing to hold back the flood waters if the rains don't stop! (True; this rumor can only appear once Chapter Three starts; otherwise substitute a different rumor for this result.)

The map of Cauldron shows the locations of The Church of St. Cuthbert, the Cathedral of Wee Jas, the Tipped Tankard, and all other locations that figure in this adventure. Other modules in this series introduce and describe other locations within the town. Feel free to add new places to the map as dictated by the needs of your campaign. For instance, if one of the PCs worships the goddess Yondalla, feel free to place a small temple or shrine dedicated to Yondalla somewhere within the city limits.

**Cauldron (large town):** Conventional; AL NG; Population 4,500 adults; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 600,000 gp; Mixed (79% human, 9% halfling, 5% gnome, 3% dwarf, 2% elf, 1% half-elf, 1% half-orc).

**Authority Figures:** Lord Mayor Severen Navalant, male human Ari10; Terseon Skellerang, male human Ftr8 (Captain of the Town Guard).

**Important Characters:** Lord Orbius Vhalantru, beholder (true overlord of Cauldron); Jenya Urikas, female human Clr6 (high priestess at the Church of St. Cuthbert); Kristof Jurgensen, male human Clr4 (cleric at the Shrine of Pelor); Omar Tiskinsen, human male Clr7 (high priest of the Church of Kord); Embryl Aloustinai, human female Wiz5/Clr9 (high priest of the Cathedral of Wee Jas); Ike Iverson, human male Clr7 (cleric at the Cathedral of Wee Jas); Artus Shemwick, male human Rog5 (fence and information broker working as a cook at the Tipped Tankard); Meerthan Eliothlorn, male half-elf Wiz12 (merchant staying at The Drowning Morkoth Inn); Skie Aldersun, female gnome Sor6 (owner of Skie's Treasuries; detailed in the Web enhancement); Keygan Ghelve, male gnome Exp3/Ill1 (owner of Ghelve's Locks); Gretchyn Tashykk, female halfling Com1 (Lantern Street Orphanage headmistress); Patch, male half-orc Com1/Rog1 (spy for The Last Laugh guild); Vortimax Weer, male human Wiz10 (alchemist and potion brewer at Weer's Elixirs); Annah Taskerhill, human female Ari1/Brd3 (member of the Stormblades and daughter of local nobles, detailed in the "Flood Season" Web enhancement); Cora Lathenmire, human female Ari1/Ftr3 (member of the Stormblades and daughter of local nobles, detailed in the Web enhancement); Todd Vanderboren, human male Ari1/Rog3 (member of the Stormblades and adopted son of local nobles, detailed in the Web enhancement); Zachary Aslaxin II, human male Ari1/Rgr2/Clr1 (member of the Stormblades and son of local nobles, detailed in the Web enhancement).

**Typical Guard Patrol:** Members of the town guard are especially vigilant in the wake of the recent abductions. A typical patrol consists of a sergeant (War4) and 1d4+2 privates (War2). Guards typically wear breastplates emblazoned with the town emblem (a watchful eye wreathed in flames) and carry halberds, short swords, and shortbows.

## RUMORS IN CAULDRON

As the adventure progresses, the PCs have ample opportunities to overhear rumors or hear news and gossip. These bits of information might be overheard in local taverns and inns, in shops, or even on the streets of the city. A successful Gather Information check yields one rumor (DC 15), two rumors (DC 20), or



three rumors (DC 25). Roll randomly or select appropriate rumors from the **Cauldron Rumors** table.

## WEATHER IN CAULDRON

This adventure should be set during a rainy season; the descriptive text assumes that the adventure takes place at the start of winter. During Chapter 1, the weather in the region is somewhat brisk, windy, and overcast. Occasional rare breaks in the cloud cover allow the sun to peer through. As the adventure progresses, the rains begin; the first real storm should start about the time the party reaches the Lucky Monkey. After this, rainstorms should continue to plague the region, so that by the time the adventure is over the city of Cauldron should be in dire need of the wands of control water stolen by the cultists.

## CHAPTER ONE: THE ONSET OF WINTER

The adventure starts as the PCs recover from their adventures in Izadirune and the Malachite Fortress below Cauldron. For some time before winter starts, they should have ample time to spend some of the money they made in their previous adventure, explore the city of Cauldron a bit more, and perhaps make some potions, scrolls, or other minor magic items. The "Flood Season" Web enhancement contains two events that can take place during this period; these events have little to do with the plot of the adventure, but serve to add depth to the overall campaign.

### THE SENDING

Some time on a morning after the PCs have fully recovered from their recent ordeal in the Malachite Fortress, they receive an urgent summons from Jenya Urikas at the temple of St. Cuthbert. The message says that she's been in contact with high priest Sarcem Delasharn and that he needs immediate assistance.

Assuming the party arrives at the Church of St. Cuthbert quickly, they find Jenya in a state of panic. She quickly ushers the PCs into a side room while worshipers and acolytes look on worriedly. Once the PCs and Jenya are in a private area, she confides in them that she just received a terribly disturbing message from Sarcem Delasharn, the high priest of the church. He sent the message via a *sending* spell to Jenya; she wrote down the message and her reply as soon as she was able and passes the hastily scribbled note to the party for them to examine.

#### PLAYER HANDOUT #1: THE SENDING FROM SARCEM

*At Lucky Monkey. Have eight wands. Tavern's been attacked. Bandits led by barbaric ogreman. Mortally wounded. Retreated to basement. They know we're here. Send assistance!*

*Sarcem? Is that you? Hang on! Conserve your resources. I'll send out aid immediately. Send me another message when you can, but until then have.*

When the PCs have read the note, Jenya tells them she meant to tell Sarcem to "have faith," but she ran out of room and the response was sent. Since the *sending*, Jenya has grown distraught. Aside from agonizing over the fact that she didn't plan her *sending* response that well, each passing minute puts Sarcem in greater peril. She briefly contemplated riding out to save him herself, but she can't leave the church unattended; if a disaster struck the city and the church was needed, Sarcem would never forgive her. So she turned to the PCs.

She asks them to ride out to the Lucky Monkey immediately to save Sarcem. She's willing to answer a few questions before the PCs leave; likely questions and her answers are given below.

**What/where is the Lucky Monkey?** The Lucky Monkey is a roadside tavern about a day's ride northwest of Cauldron. It's a popular, convenient rest stop for travelers on the northwest road. Jenya can provide a map of the Cauldron region (**Player Handout #2**) that shows the route to the Lucky Monkey.

**Can you come with us to the Lucky Monkey?** She cannot accompany the party, even though she desperately wants to. She must remain in Cauldron and tend to the church and any emergencies that might pop up.

**Can you send any help with us?** Jenya can't afford to send anyone with the PCs to the Lucky Monkey. If the PCs ask about Alek Tercival, the temple's resident paladin, she tells them that he is tending to another urgent matter at this time and is out of town. She refuses to go into any more detail about this matter.

**What was Sarcem talking about when he mentioned the wands?** Sarcem purchased eight wands of control water during this trip to the capital city; the wands are used to help control the waters of the central lake during the rainy season. Traditionally, clerics from the four main churches in Cauldron build the year's wands from scratch, but over the past several years the flood seasons have been minor at worst and the other three churches have lost interest in providing the time and effort to build wands this year. It is vital that the wands get back to Cauldron before the flood season starts.

**Who do you think assaulted the Lucky Monkey?** Jenya has no idea; she's heard rumors of bandits operating in the area, but an assault on the Lucky Monkey makes no sense. The owners aren't particularly wealthy, and bandits have never attacked any established structures in the region as long as she can remember. Hopefully the PCs can find some clues at the Lucky Monkey.

**What's in it for us?** Naturally, Jenya hopes that the PCs agree to ride to Sarcem's aid out of a sense of compassion, but she understands if they take a more mercenary angle to her request. She can offer them each a *potion of cure moderate wounds* immediately, and if they can rescue Sarcem or the wands, she'll give the party a reward of 5,000 gp (total, not per PC) as well.

If the party needs mounts, Jenya can arrange for a number of riding horses for them. She urges them to make haste to the Lucky Monkey; Sarcem is a fairly powerful cleric and he wouldn't call for help like this unless he were in dire peril. Jenya tries to arrange for a patrol of city guards to head out to the



Lucky Monkey as well, but wading through the red tape might take some time . . . time Sarcem doesn't have. See the "Flood Season" Web enhancement for Jenya Urikas's updated statistics.

## CHAPTER TWO: DEATH AT THE LUCKY MONKEY

In this chapter, the PCs travel to a roadside tavern to save a high priest, only to find that they are too late. Sarcem has been killed by the werebaboon Tongueater and his minions, and the villains are now busy looting the place. While they do expect travelers to continue to stop by, and planned to set up a few of their numbers as fake employees to turn away such visitors as needed, they think that their actions have gone unnoticed and are not expecting retaliation this soon.

If the PCs think ahead, they can secure maps of the Lucky Monkey in Cauldron before they leave. The Lucky Monkey is a fairly popular place to stay for travelers along the northwest road, so securing a map of the roadhouse is fairly easy, requiring a Gather Information check (DC 15) and 10 gp. If the PCs find a map, you can provide them with a copy of the inn's map.

### CAULDRON ENVIRONS

**Player Handout #2** consists of a rough map of the area surrounding Cauldron; they can obtain a copy of this map from Jenya, or barring that, from any number of merchants in town for a mere 15 gp. A PC who succeeds at a bardic knowledge or Knowledge (local) check (DC 15) knows enough about the region that he can draft his own copy of this map. The map only shows relative positions of areas of interest, and is not to a particular scale. That said, the Lucky Monkey (as well as the three frontier villages of Kingfisher Hollow, Hollowsky, and Redgorge) are all approximately 24 miles away from Cauldron.

Cauldron is located in a sub-tropical climate. The foothills surrounding the taller mountains are rugged and covered with scrub, but are fairly open for several miles before giving way to rolling savannahs. These savannahs then transform into particularly dense sub-tropical jungles a few miles farther out from the mountains. This region is a true frontier land; a few villages sit in the



foothills and lowlands (as indicated on the regional map), but aside from these and the roads, the area is still a true wilderness.

As long as the PCs stay to the roads, they shouldn't have any dangerous encounters. The most disturbing thing that happens might even go unnoticed by some parties: at several points during the journey through the lowlands, they pass within a few hundred feet of several large troops of baboons. Allow characters a Spot check (DC 23, or DC 18 if the character has the wild empathy special ability) as they do; success indicates that character notices the baboons become quiet and still as the group passes. Dozens of sinister black eyes follow their progress until the PCs are a bit down the road, at which time the baboons resume their normal behavior. A typical troop of baboons numbers about 30, and they defend themselves and their territory with great ferocity if threatened; if statistics become necessary, you can use those provided in the *Monster Manual*, page 193.

### CAMPAIGN SEED: THE CAULDRON REGION

Aside from Cauldron and the Lucky Monkey, several other sites of possible interest are indicated on the player's map of the region. You can use these areas and names as springboards for future adventures in the area; details on these additional locations are beyond the scope of this adventure, although some of them may figure prominently in future adventures in the **Adventure Path: Shattered City** series.

Three of the locations shown on the regional map (Redgorge, Kingfisher Hollow, and Hollowsky) are small villages of no more than 500 inhabitants. Any of these villages could serve as a base of operations for characters who wish to explore some of these other sites.

Some hints as to the nature of the other locations can be found in the text; Hookface, for example, is rumored to be a powerful and ancient dragon, while the ruined city of Shatterhorn is known to be a yuan-ti haunt. Other locations, such as Crazy Jared's Hut or the Demonskar, aren't mentioned at all, and you can develop these locations into adventures of your own.

Finally, some of these locations may be detailed further in upcoming adventures in this series. If you develop one of these regions on your own and it happens to be developed differently in a future adventure, you can always change the adventure to unfold in a region you haven't expanded yet.



# The Lucky Monkey



Upper  
Level

WEST

1 square = 5 feet

Ground  
Level



Basement





## THE LUCKY MONKEY

At first sight, the Lucky Monkey doesn't look all that unusual. The roadhouse itself sits to the east of the road, partially surrounded by the dense jungle. The building is old and well used—the chimneys stained with soot, the roof sagging, the wood siding weathered and stained from last year's mildew. A smaller stable stands to the building's side in a similar condition. The façade of the building sports numerous carved wooden monkeys, many of which are engaged in risky, death-defying stunts. In one, a wooden monkey balances on a narrow tree branch to get a banana hanging over a sleeping tiger; in another, a monkey sits on a boulder completely unaware that a poacher sneaking up behind him was suddenly attacked and eaten by an ankheg.

As you step closer, though, you begin to see signs that something terrible has recently happened here—a broken window, a spray of blood against the wall, crushed plants and churned up earth in the space between the façade and the road. Then there's the harsh sound of construction... or more likely, destruction, coming from the building's interior.

Although several bandits lurk in the Lucky Monkey when the party first arrives at the roadhouse, they are not in the best condition to defend their ill gotten gains. Triel led the attack on the tavern. Once she made sure that Sarcem was dead and she had the *wands of control water*, she left for her headquarters in the Kopru Ruins. She left Tongueater and the rest of her minions behind to scrounge what wealth they could from the place and finish off the last few survivors. She doesn't expect her cohort to return to the cult headquarters for a few days.

The majority of the villains encountered in this chapter (including all the thugs and Alleybashers) have been at the alcohol stores; as a result they are all rather drunk. As long as they remain drunk (which lasts for approximately 2 hours after they realize they're under attack), the bandits suffer a -2 circumstance penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Defeating a drunk bandit is much easier than defeating a sober one, and you should reduce the XP award for such defeats by 50%.

Should the bandits discover they're under attack, they try to rally, but their drunken state fills them with false bravado. Rather than forming an organized defense, they tend to hit the party in small groups of three or four. As they search the roadhouse for the PCs, keep in mind that their drunkenness impacts many of their skill checks and attack rolls.

Sturdy wooden shutters cover both ground and second floor windows of the inn. The shutters were closed for the night when the bandits attacked, and the intruders have left them closed and locked. Breaking or forcing the shutters automatically alerts those in the room beyond that someone is attempting a forced entry.

◆ **Locked Shutters:** 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; Open Locks DC 15; break DC 13.

**Doors:** Doors in the Lucky Monkey are of good quality.

◆ **Wooden Doors:** 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Open Locks varies by room; break DC 18.

## OUTSIDE THE LUCKY MONKEY

The encounters in this section refer to the map of the Lucky Monkey and surrounding area.

### 1. THE LUCKY MONKEY

The bandits have locked the front doors (Open Locks, DC 28) and piled the ruin of a table against it, further blocking the door from outside intruders. Once the door is unlocked, a successful Strength check (DC 23) is still necessary to push open the doors.

### 2. STABLES

The stables can house up to twenty-four horses with ease, although at the time the bandits struck the building held only fourteen. All of them fled the stables, driven to terror by the lycanthrope's proximity.

### 3. SIDE ENTRANCE

These exterior doors to the Lucky Monkey have been locked (Open Locks, DC 28) and barricaded with a desk (Strength check, DC 23, to push open the doors from outside).

### 4. SERVICE ENTRANCE

Tongueater has converted the kitchen into his base of operations in the roadhouse, and he keeps these doors locked (Open Locks, DC 30).

### 5. HUNGRY WILDLIFE (EL 5)

After the slaughter of the majority of the guests and employees of the Lucky Monkey, Tongueater and his bandits hauled the bodies out to the edge of the jungle behind the roadhouse and stacked them here. The morbid mound of corpses numbers fifteen in all. The bandits looted the bodies thoroughly before stacking them.

**Creature:** The mound of bodies quickly drew the attention of local scavengers and predators, but they were chased off by the arrival of a pair of hungry deinonychuses. The dinosaurs have claimed the mound of bodies as their own and currently chew away at them contentedly. They attack any creature that attacks them or approaches within 20 feet of their feast.

◆ **Deinonychus (2):** hp 41, 38; *Monster Manual* 55.

## INSIDE THE LUCKY MONKEY

The interior of the Lucky Monkey is comfortable, but most of it has been savaged by the bandits in their search for loot and booze. Most of the rooms have windows for light; after dark, lanterns and candles served to light the place. Throughout the roadhouse, the motif of lucky monkeys can be seen. For example, the mantles of the carved stone fireplaces feature numerous monkeys cavorting through trap-filled passageways.



## M1. COMMON ROOM (EL 4)

Ruined tavern tables, bloodstains, torn up floorboards, and general wreckage dominate this once cozy tavern room.

**Creatures:** Although many of the bandits hired by the cultists are simple thugs, a similar number consist of a one-time gang of rogues that operated in a large city to the south. Known as the Alleybashers, these rogues operated numerous protection rackets and muggings until their leader was captured and they were forced to flee. The Alleybashers hired by Triel tend to think of the other thugs as lower rank and often try to order them around. The thugs detest being told what to do, and minor fights between the two groups are common.

Four thugs and two Alleybashers drink and carouse here.

☛ **Nather, Terney, Lence, and Jendy, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (4):** CR 2; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d10+4; hp 23, 20, 18, 17; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword); AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Skills:** Climb +1\*, Jump +1\*, Swim –3\*\*. **Feats:** Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longsword).

\*Includes –6 armor check penalty.

\*\*Includes –11 penalty for weight of gear carried.

**Languages:** Common.

**Possessions:** Chainmail, masterwork large steel shield, masterwork longsword, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, red sash.

☛ **Nathilie and Feristin, Alleybasher Male and Female Human Rog2 (2):** CR 2; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d6+5; hp 18, 14; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will –1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 13.

**Skills:** Bluff +6, Climb +6, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Search +7, Spot +4, Tumble +8. **Feats:** Improved Initiative, Toughness.

**Languages:** Common, Gnome, Halfling.

**Possessions:** Studded leather, masterwork rapier, shortbow with 20 arrows, red sash.

## M2–4. PRIVATE BOOTHS (EL 3)

These smaller rooms were rented out to larger parties for private dining or meetings.

**Creatures:** A thug and an Alleybasher have retreated to area M3 for a more private place to explore their interests in each other. They are unlikely to immediately notice the sounds of combat in the main room.

☛ **Pierito, Male Human Ftr2:** hp 20; see area M1 for details.

☛ **Bria, Alleybasher Female Human Rog2:** hp 12; see area M1 for details.

## M5. STAIRS

This flight of stairs leads up to area M31 of the upper floor.

## M6. STAGE (EL 2)

This raised platform is arranged like a stage; a couple of large chairs sit against the walls before an extraordinarily large fireplace. Ashes have been scattered across the floor, and the fireplace itself is in ruins—large holes are smashed in the sides and back of it and crumbled bricks lie stacked haphazardly to the side.

**Creature:** A semiconscious thug lies in one of the chairs here. She rouses in 1d4 rounds if combat erupts in area M1.

☛ **Corene, Female Human Ftr2:** hp 18; see area M1 for details.

## M7. BAR

The flight of stairs behind the bar leads up to area M28.

## M8–9. RESTROOMS

The doors to each of these restrooms can be locked from the inside. Tongueater currently holds the keys to open these locks. Either of these locked doors can otherwise be opened with a successful Open Locks check (DC 20).

## M10. TRAVELER'S ENTRANCE

Most travelers, after leaving their horses in the nearby stable, entered the Lucky Monkey by this door and arranged for rooms with a receptionist here.

## M11. NIGHTCLERK'S QUARTERS

This room served as the personal quarters of the Lucky Monkey's nightclerk.

## M12. ROOM KEY STORAGE

This room contains a large ruined chest of drawers that once contained copies of keys for all the rooms on the upper floor. The bandits smashed the drawers apart and took the keys to aid in their search.

## M13. STOREROOM

This large room is a complete mess; it was used to store everything from firewood to bed linens to lamp oil to lumber.

## M14. RECORDS ROOM/LIBRARY

Cabinets and shelves line the walls of this room; additional free-standing shelves clutter the central portion of the room. Most of them have been knocked over, and scrolls, papers, and books are scattered across the floor.

This room contained reading material for use by the Lucky Monkey's guests. It also held old guestbooks and other records kept by the roadhouse.

## M15. CHAPEL TO FHARLANGHN

Once a comfortable, well-tended, and cozy chapel, this chamber now lies in ruins. Shattered chairs and torn up swaths of





carpet clutter the floor, and holes have been knocked in the walls. Even the altar has been smashed to splinters.

Funding for the Lucky Monkey's construction was partially provided by the church of Fharlanghn, on the condition that a small chapel dedicated to the Dweller on the Horizon be maintained on site. The caretaker of the shrine was a half-elf named Shensen (see area M43).

### M16. PRIVATE LOUNGE

This lounge was used by the employees of the Lucky Monkey to relax, game, and eat.

### M17. SHENSEN'S ROOM

This room looks like it once served as a combination lounge, library, conservatory, and bedroom. Unfortunately, it's now in the same condition as the rest of this place—in ruins. The bed's mattress is torn into tatters, an upright piano lies in fragments against the nearby wall, and pieces of furniture lie in heaps on the floor.

This is where Shensen Tesserill, the Lucky Monkey's current keeper of the Chapel of Fharlanghn, lived. She preferred to spend most of her time outside and was just returning from a walk when the bandits attacked. She is the only survivor of the bandit attack and has barricaded herself in the well room (area M43).

### M18–19. EMPLOYEE QUARTERS

The waitresses, cooks, bartenders, and chambermaids employed by the Lucky Monkey lived in these rooms.

### M20. GARDENING SUPPLIES

This room contains numerous gardening tools, along with a tiny bunk used by the Lucky Monkey's groundskeeper.

### M21. COURTYARD (EL 5)

This central courtyard looks like it escaped the devastation that has been visited upon the rest of the roadhouse. Trees and flowerbeds accent the area, and a white gravel path winds past a pair of marble fountains that bear intricate carvings of monkeys taunting all manner of strange monsters.



While the bandits have left this area untouched, most of Tongueater's baboon minions have settled into the courtyard.

**Creatures:** Five hill baboons lurk in the courtyard. The baboons are loyal to Tongueater and won't attack Tongueater or anyone wearing a red sash on their wrist. The thugs and Alleybashers (all human men and women) are careful to always wear these sashes when they're around the savage creatures.

➤ **Hill Baboons (advanced baboon) (5):** CR 1; Medium Animal; HD 3d8+3; hp 19, 18, 15 ×2, 13; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., climb 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11; BAB +2; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, bite); SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4.

**Skills:** Climb +10, Listen +5, Spot +5. **Feats:** Alertness.

**Tactics:** The baboons attack anyone in the room who doesn't wear a red sash. They fight fiercely until slain.

**Development:** If a PC manages to *charm*, *calm*, or *dominate* one of the baboons, it can provide some information. A captive baboon "speaks" glowingly about the great ape leader (a reference to Tongueater), and that he currently resides in the man-food room (a reference to the kitchen—area M27). A baboon can describe Tongueater in vague terms, but it always describes his ape form. A friendly baboon also mentions the leader's metal tooth (a reference to the lycanthrope's falchion). The baboons don't remember Triel much beyond her armor and don't volunteer information about her. Non-dominated baboons won't willingly attack troop-mates.

## M22. BANQUET HALL

This room could be rented to host banquets for large groups of important visitors. The stairs ascend to the second floor.

## M23. STOREROOM

Cleaning supplies were kept here.

## M24. PREPARATION ROOM

This room was used to prepare dinners for the banquet hall.

## M25. MEETING ROOM

This small office was used by the employees for meetings.

## M26. TREASURY

Five large iron safes sit against the opposite wall, each of them hanging open and empty. A desk against the wall to

the south lies on its side, its front smashed in and its mundane contents strewn about the place.

The door to this room is completely battered down. Several large safes held the monetary holdings of the Lucky Monkey; the Alleybashers have already cracked these safes and consolidated the money in the kitchen (area M27).

## M27. KITCHEN (EL 6)

This large room was obviously the roadhouse's kitchen. The large metal tables for food preparation have all been pushed against the walls, leaving the firepit in the center of the room isolated. An impressive stack of coins, paintings, silverware, bottles of wine, and other costly looking treasures lie stacked near the firepit in organized piles.

The bandits decided to make this room their base of operations. The stairs lead up to area M30, and a broken-down door below them leads to a flight of stairs heading to the basement.

**Creatures:** Tongueater is here, busily counting the loot his minions have gathered together so far, or cursing and mocking Sarcem's severed head. Three hill baboons lurk in the room as well; they fight to the death to defend their beloved master.

➤ **Tongueater, Male Half-orc Werebaboon (afflicted lycanthrope) Bbn3, Hybrid Form:** CR 5; Medium Humanoid (Half-Orc, Shapechanger); HD 3d12+6 plus 1d8+3; hp 40; Init +7; Spd 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18; BAB +3; Grap +8; Atk +9 melee (2d4+7/18–20, masterwork falchion) and +6 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA lycanthropic empathy, rage 1/day; SQ alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver, fast movement, scent, trap sense (+1), uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6.

**Skills:** Climb +10, Control Shape +7, Intimidate +5, Listen +5. **Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack.

**Languages:** Common.

**Possessions:** Heward's handy haversack, four potions of cure light wounds, potion of jump, potion of blur, potion of magic fang, potion of enlarge (at 5th level), masterwork studded leather, masterwork falchion, key ring (opens all locked doors in the Lucky Monkey).

**Half-orc Form:** As hybrid form but with the following changes: hp 36; Init +5; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (2d4+4/18–20, masterwork falchion); SV Fort +7, Ref +4; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 15.

## CAMPAIGN SEED: SHENSEN TESSERIL AND OTHER RECURRING NPCs

Shensen can become one of the party's most supportive allies throughout the course of this adventure. Her good word goes a long way with Meerthan, should the party wish to join the Striders of Fharlanghn at a later date. She is more than willing to donate her skills, spells, and knowledge to the party for their use, and may even fall in love with a male PC of similar interests or skills to her own.

Developing Shensen into a key NPC over the course of this series of adventures is an excellent way to provide yet another layer of continuity to the overall campaign, and she might have an important role to play later. As the PCs continue to adventure and level up, you should level Shensen up as well (although you might want to wait until the PCs are equal to her level before starting this); she most likely continues to take druid levels, although her exact path of development is up to you.



**Baboon Form:** As hybrid form but with the following changes: AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Atk +8 melee (1d6+7, bite).

Tongueater is a feral half-orc who prefers to spend most of his time in hybrid form. In this form, his face and snout are baboonish, complete with large, razor-sharp fangs. A large mane of black hair sprouts from his head, and he is quite fond of facial warpaint, body piercings (mostly of bone or metal jewelry), and decorative, self-inflicted scar patterns. His studded leather armor is tailored to fit him in half-orc or hybrid form, but if he assumes baboon form the armor falls off.

➤ **Hill Baboons (3):** hp 15, 14, 12; see area M21.

**Development:** The bandits in area M38 arrive in 3 rounds to aid Tongueater if they hear the sounds of battle in the kitchen.

**Treasure:** Tongueater has spread the collected loot of the Lucky Monkey out on a large table and is sorting through it, piling it into large leather sacks for transport back to the Kopru Ruins. The loot consists of 2,680 cp, 1,953 sp, 742 gp, 18 pp, and 4,500 gp worth of various art objects (paintings, sculptures, silverware, wine, and so forth) weighing a total of 120 pounds. This loot belongs to the murdered guests and employees of the Lucky Monkey. Tracking down the families of the victims is a daunting task, and few fault the PCs if they keep the loot.

One final item of note to be found here is Sarcem's severed head (the rest of his body can be found in the basement). Tongueater has mounted this grisly trophy on the wall and has eaten its tongue. If the high priest's head is returned to Cauldron, a *speak with dead* spell could provide valuable clues.

## M28. STAIRS

These stairs descend to area M7.

## M29. BRIDGE

This bridge leads over the courtyard below and allows the cooks to move between the bar and kitchen without disrupting the guests in the courtyard. It arcs 10 feet over the ground below.

## M30. STAIRS

These stairs descend to area M27.

## M31. STAIRS

These stairs descend to area M5.

## M32. FLOPROOM

This large room contains several bunks for travelers who had a tight budget.

## M33. GUEST ROOMS (EL 4 OR 6)

Several bandits are in the process of looting and destructively searching these rooms.

**Creatures:** Two of these rooms (determined randomly when the PCs arrive) contain a group of two thugs and two Alleybashers busy dismantling the place looking for loot. If one group of four bandits is attacked and they call for help, the second group of four comes to their aid if they hear the cries.

☙ **Shanni, Rollin, Wart, and Daniki, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (2 per group):** hp 21, 20 ×2, 18; see area M1 for details.

☙ **Chana, Dantiano, Chupo, and Lystiviny, Alleybasher Male and Female Human Rog2 (2 per group):** hp 16, 15, 14 ×2; see area M1 for details.

## M34. GUEST LOUNGE

This room gave guests a quiet place to relax or play cards away from the hustle and bustle of the common room downstairs.

## M35–36. BATHS

Each of these rooms contains a large round tub and a cabinet containing towels, scented oils, and soaps.

## M37. HIGH CLASS GUEST ROOMS

These four guest rooms were fairly extravagant before the bandits took them apart.

## M38. ORIN'S BEDROOM (EL 3)

This large room looks like a combination office, lounge, and bedroom. At one point, several wooden panels could be moved to separate the room into smaller areas, but they, like most of the other furniture in this room, have been smashed.

The one time owner of the Lucky Monkey, a human expert named Orin Marsh, lived in and ran his business from this large combination bedroom and office.

**Creatures:** A group of two thugs and an Alleybasher are still busy tearing this room apart.

☙ **Teruch and Ilsawyn, Female Human Ftr2 (2):** hp 21, 18; see area M1 for details.

☙ **Paldi, Alleybasher Male Human Rog2 (1):** hp 16; see area M1 for details.

**Development:** These bandits rush down the stairs to aid Tongueater if they hear sounds of battle or cries for help coming from the kitchen.

## M39. BATTLEFIELD (EL 5)

This room is dominated by several large tanks, kegs, and other brewing equipment. The tanks are now empty and hacked to pieces, and the floor is a stinking morass of muddy earth soaked with a mixture of beer, mead, and blood. A terrible battle must have taken place here.

Sarcem and the other last survivors made their final stand in this chamber. Most of the bodies (including fallen bandits) were taken away to be piled at the edge of the jungle behind the roadhouse, but Tongueater was particularly disgusted with Sarcem, who put up quite a fight. The high priest's mutilated body lies slumped against the base of a battered keg, the head missing completely. After being burned by Sarcem's magic mace, Tongueater decided to leave the body's gear intact until he was ready to return to Cauldron.



**Creatures:** Three thugs and two Alleybashers have gathered near the passageway opposite the stairs, trying to come up with a safe way to batter down the door at the far end without getting too close to the deadly barricade (see area M42). An earlier attempt to burn the door down resulted in disaster.

☙ **Nisty, Moruka, and Lakus, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (3):** hp 24, 20, 17; see area M1 for details.

☙ **Arn and Ildawyn, Alleybasher Male and Female Human Rog2 (2):** hp 16, 14; see area M1 for details.

**Treasure:** Sarcem's bloody hand still grips his +1 *holy light mace*. His other gear consists of a suit of +1 *banded mail*, three empty potion bottles, a *ring of protection +1*, and a *periap of wisdom +2*.

**Development:** These bandits rush up the stairs to aid Tongueater if they hear sounds of battle or cries for help coming from the kitchen.

## M40. WINE CELLAR

This room contains several (now empty) wine racks.

## M41. FRUIT CELLAR

This room contains fruit and vegetables, although most have been cast carelessly to the dirt floor by bandits searching for treasure.

## M42. COLD STORAGE

This room feels moist and humid. Several sides of meat hang from hooks set into the ceiling, and a number of storage bins line the west wall. The far end of the room is empty except for an open metal box lying on its side; the box is lined with slowly melting frost.

The door of this chamber bears a sign, "NO FIRE BEYOND THIS POINT." This room was used to store meat and other perishables; the room itself was kept cold by a small container of brown mold (see page 117 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*) kept in a sealed metal box at the far end of the room. Shensen used the box of mold to create her barricade; the room is still cool, but not quite as cold as area M43.

## M43. WELL ROOM (EL VARIABLE)

The temperature in this room is near freezing. A thin layer of frost coats the floor and walls of the northern portion of the room. A low, circular well sits in the center of the room, its mouth partially covered by a few planks of wood.

The door to this room is a solid, iron-reinforced wooden door that bulges at the seams, almost as if the wood had melted and expanded to clog the doorway. This is a result of Shensen's *wood shape* spell. Three dead Alleybashers lie on the ground before the door, killed by the **Trap**. Assuming the party can get by this door and the **Trap**, they find the room beyond to be near freezing. The well is 30 feet deep; huddled to the south of it is Shensen Tesseril.

☙ **Warped Wooden Door:** 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18.

**Trap (EL 2):** The 5-foot squares to either side of the door to this room are thick with brown mold. Opening the door instantly exposes the character before it to the mold.

☙ **Brown Mold:** CR 2; 3d6 cold subdual damage within 5 feet; fire brought within 5 feet doubles its size; can be destroyed by cold damage (see the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 117).

**Creature (EL 5):** When Sarcem was killed by Tongueater, Shensen knew that she only had a few seconds to live if she didn't think fast. She ran to the cold storage room, grabbed the metal box of brown mold, then fled to this room. As she passed through the door, she opened the box and scattered the mold all over it, then managed to *wood shape* the door, causing it to become ferociously stuck. Already wounded by the battle, the additional cold damage dealt by the mold nearly finished her. She barely managed to erect the barricade before collapsing.

☙ **Shensen Tesseril, Female Half-drow Brd1/Drd3/Mnk1:** CR 5; Medium Humanoid (half-elf); HD 1d6-1 plus 4d8-4; hp 16 (currently 0 including 5 points of subdual damage); Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; BAB +2; Grap +2; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, unarmed strike); SA spells, countersong, fascinate, inspire courage (+1) (already used), unarmed strike, stunning attack 1/day (already used); SQ bardic knowledge, half-elf traits, evasion; AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 14.

**Skills:** Animal Empathy +8, Concentration +6, Disguise +4, Diplomacy +5, Jump +35, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +8, Perform +7, Tumble +7. **Feats:** Run, Weapon Finesse (unarmed strike).

**Druid Spells Prepared (4/3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level):** 0—*create water*, *flare* (cast), *know direction*, *light* (cast); 1st—*calm animals* (cast), *cure light wounds* (cast), *summon nature's ally I* (cast); 2nd—*resist energy* (cast), *wood shape* (cast).

**Bard Spells Known (3; base save DC = 12 + spell level):** 0—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*. (Shensen has cast two bard spells already today.)

**Languages:** Common, Druidic, Elven, Halfling.

**Possessions:** *Ring of protection +1*, *ring of jumping*, *wand of magic fang* (13 charges left), *wand of entangle* (7 charges left).

Shensen has long silver hair, dusky skin, and is nimble and athletic, although she is currently in poor shape from her fight with Tongueater and his goons. As a child, she was raised in a monastery and trained as a monk. But when her elders turned away a wounded druid who sought protection from wrongful punishment at the hands of an angry mob, she went against the wishes of her elders and let the druid into the monastery through a secret door. When her actions were discovered, the monks turned the druid over to the mob (which quickly executed him) and exiled Shensen. The experience left her embittered to the overly ordered and detached lifestyle of the monk, and although she retains some of the training she gained at the monastery, she never returned to that lifestyle. Instead, she became an explorer and wandering storyteller, combining the social graces of the bard with the reverence of nature of a druid. Eventually, she encountered the Striders of Fharlanghn and joined their ranks, and for the past year she's been the attendant





caretaker of the chapel of Fharlanghn at the Lucky Monkey.

**Development:** If rescued, Shensen is grateful, but her first order of business is to contact her mentor in the Striders of Fharlanghn (Meerthan Eliothlorn) and inform him of the attack on the Lucky Monkey (a holy place to Fharlanghn's followers). She must go meet him in Cauldron at the Drowning Morkoth Inn, and asks to travel with the party back to town (see "Life's Bazaar" and the accompanying Web enhancement for more information

on Meerthan Eliothlorn). She promises not to forget the aid the PCs gave her, and she is true to her word. After she reports to Meerthan, she returns to the group and rewards them with a pair of *boots of striding and springing*, given to her by Meerthan as thanks for her rescue and the rescue of the Lucky Monkey building before it was completely destroyed.

Shensen doesn't have much information to impart about the attack. She was returning from a walk when she heard the

### CAMPAIGN SEED: THE CHURCH OF WEE JAS

Whereas the Church of St. Cuthbert can be an ally and supporter for the PCs, the Church of Wee Jas should be a recurring foil to their efforts. As the PCs become more powerful, they catch the eye of Ike and eventually that of Embryl herself. In public situations where the PCs might be trying to accomplish some social goal, the church of Wee Jas takes up a contrary position to the PCs' goals and desires, more often than not simply to oppose them.

The exact reasons for the church's adversarial nature are quite hidden, and should not come to light any time in the near future, for Embryl Aloustinai is in fact a close ally of the Cagewrights, the sinister faction working to transform Cauldron into a gate town to Carceri. She may be nothing more than a supporter, she may be one of the Shackleborn (key individuals fated to play important parts in the plans of the Cagewrights), or she may even be one of the Cagewrights

herself. Whatever her true allegiances, she notices the PCs and realizes that they have the stuff of greatness in them. She believes that should they be left to explore, develop, and learn on their own, chances are that they will eventually become powerful enough to pose a serious threat to the Cagewrights' plans for Cauldron.

If one of the PCs is a worshiper of Wee Jas, this can make for some entertaining roleplaying. The Wee Jas worshiper might soon find his loyalties divided between the church and his adventuring companions. One thing to note is that Wee Jas herself doesn't necessarily approve of Embryl's actions, and as she becomes more and more involved with the Cagewrights, it's more likely that splinter faiths of Wee Jas break off from the main church and form underground resistances to the growing corruption in the upper ranks of the religion. Perhaps the PC worshiper can join, or even found, such a group.



sound of combat. She ran to investigate and found the bandits had already slain most of the guests and employees. Only a few remained standing, including a human cleric who seemed to be the focus of the bandits' attention. She knows that the bandits were led by a horrible man-beast, and that this creature followed the orders of a beautiful woman with red hair wearing a suit of full plate emblazoned with a strange symbol: a mailed fist clutching six barbed arrows (a Knowledge—religion check, DC 20, identifies this as the holy symbol of Hextor). She lent what aid she could, but they were eventually forced to retreat to the basement, where the beast-man killed the cleric. This left Shensen alone and outnumbered. She fled to the far end of the basement, using a *resist elements* spell to protect her as she set up the brown mold barricade before staggering into the corner.

**Ad-Hoc Experience Award:** If the party rescues Shensen, award them experience points as if they had defeated her in combat.

## CHAPTER THREE: FIND THE MISSING WANDS

In this chapter, the PCs return to Cauldron as the rain begins to fall. The mood in the city is festive as the Flood Festival begins, but there is an undercurrent of tension. Rumors abound that the *wands of control water* used to hold the floodwaters at bay are lost, and the churches of Cauldron have done little to refute this gossip. The party must determine what happened to the wands quickly so an attempt to retrieve them can be made before the city begins to flood.

### EVENT 1: THE FLOOD SEASON BEGINS

At some time during the climax of Chapter Two, the overcast skies darken and turn an angry shade of purple-grey, and within minutes, the first of many downpours begins to blanket the region with sheets of rain. The rainstorms aren't unending, but they are quite common. As the days pass, it quickly becomes apparent that the area is in for the wettest winter in more than a decade.

During these storms, the region is buffeted by strong winds, with a 5% chance per hour of a gust of severe winds that lasts for 1d6 rounds. The effects of strong and severe winds are given on **Table 3-17** in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* (page 87). The driving rain and wind impose a -8 penalty on all Spot, Search, and Listen checks.

The only good thing to arise from the bad weather is the fact that it seems to have driven off all of the dangerous animals and beasts of the region; the party should not have any encounters on the way back, provided they stick to the road.

### EVENT 2: RETURN TO CAULDRON

The storm lets up a little bit and even allows for a few sunny breaks by the time the group returns to the city. They find Cauldron to be unexpectedly busy in the wake of the sudden storm, for the city is rushing to prepare for the first of many expected Flood Festivals. Decorations are going up on building façades

and over streets, merchant and game booths pop up along streets and in vacant lots, bards and other entertainers come out in force to ply their trades, and overall, a carnival-like atmosphere seems to be settling over the city. Sarcem's death might make it difficult to enjoy the festivities; the Church of St. Cuthbert, in particular, feels anything but celebratory (see **Event 3**).

As the days go by, the festivities lose steam. The relentless rainstorms begin to depress the public, and the inexorable rise of the water level begins to worry them. If the *wands of control water* are not recovered quickly, flooding and riots are real dangers to the people of Cauldron. You should time the rise of the waters so that it provides a constant growing threat in the background. Use it to keep the PCs focused on their task. The lake has several natural drains into the Underdark and also out the side of the volcano into a number of surrounding rivers, so it won't overflow overnight. Most of the buildings around the lakeshore are built on stilts to avoid minor floods, but if the party takes too long to recover the wands, not even these measures can save the lower quarters of the city from flooding.

### EVENT 3: THE HUNT BEGINS

The PCs should return to the Church of St. Cuthbert and report their findings to Jenya. She takes the news of Sarcem's death stoically. After a brief moment of despair her tearing eyes fill with a steely resolve. She's just become the high priestess of the church, and full authority to act on the situation is hers and hers alone. If she promised to reward the PCs with money for their rescue attempt, she points out that the group has yet to retrieve the wands; until they do so, the reward stays in the temple treasury. She hopes that she won't have to resort to such tactics to enlist the party's aid in recovering the wands, of course. If the PCs have it, she requests the return of Sarcem's holy mace, which is actually the property of the church and the badge of office of the new high priest or priestess. She does allow them to keep his other possessions if they brought his body back for proper interment in the church's burial catacombs. If the PCs left the body behind, Jenya sends some of her acolytes to retrieve it from the Lucky Monkey.

At this point, the recovery of the *wands of control water* should become the party's primary goal. They have no idea where the wands have been taken, but the group can pursue several leads. Searching for these clues is difficult and time consuming; researching a specific lead should take, on average, 4 hours of work. Jenya encourages the PCs to seek out the wands, but she is just as adamant that someone seek justice for Sarcem. If the PCs don't suggest casting *speak with dead* on his body, Jenya brings it up the following day, tracking the PCs down, if necessary, so they can benefit from the spell (see **Divination Magic**, below).

**The Red-Haired Woman:** If they managed to rescue and befriend her, Shensen can provide the best lead. If the PCs get a detailed description of the woman with red hair in plate mail from her, allow them a Knowledge (local) check or a bardic knowledge check (DC 25). If the group fails this check, they can (once they return to Cauldron) find out this information by



interviewing locals in town and making a successful Gather Information check (DC 21); each attempt takes 4 hours and costs 2d6 gp in bribes. Successfully identifying the woman in armor from Shensen's description reveals her to be none other than the notorious Triel Eldurast, a one-time town guard of Cauldron who escaped punishment after murdering several of her fellow guards while on duty. This event took place nearly a decade ago, so the specifics have grown hazy in the memories of the people of Cauldron. Nothing has been heard of Triel since her escape, so the guard and citizens eventually assumed she succumbed to her wounds and died in the wilderness. She orchestrated the attack on the Lucky Monkey.

**Interrogating Prisoners:** The PCs might have managed to capture one or more bandits at the Lucky Monkey. Unfortunately, interrogating them yields little useful information. They were all hired by Triel from the alleys of Cauldron or the surrounding environs, but none of them have been to (or even suspect the existence of) the Kopru Ruins under Cauldron. They can provide a detailed description of Triel, though, and know that their mission was to provide support for Tongueater, who had been charged with Sarcem's assassination and the theft of some magic items he was carrying. They are not too loyal, and a successful Intimidate check (DC 11) gets them talking; they're quite afraid that their roles in the assassination of a prominent local figure might get them executed.

Tongueater knows quite a bit more; he's actually been to the Kopru Ruins several times and knows about the secret entrance to the lava tube that leads to the ruins. It is unlikely he can be captured alive, though, since he is fanatic and fights to the death. Nonetheless, if captured, a successful Intimidate check (DC 20) impresses him enough that he admits working for Triel. If further pressed, he tries to Bluff his captors by feeding them false information (perhaps by telling them that Triel has a base of operations in a nearby city like Redgorge or dangerous region like the Demonskar). Getting the actual location of the Kopru Ruins out of him should be difficult without magic (such as *charm monster* or *suggestion*) or torture.

If the PCs take Tongueater prisoner, Triel sends groups of Alleybashers to save him. The first consists of four Alleybashers, and if they fail she personally leads a second group of six Alleybashers in an attempt to save her cohort.

**Divination Magic:** If a PC wishes to use a spell that the party doesn't have access to but that Jenya can cast, she gladly casts the spell for them for free if the request is brought to her attention.

**Divination:** Although it's unlikely that any of the PCs can cast this spell, Jenya can cast it using the *Star of Justice*, a magic +1 holy heavy mace that can cast *divination* once per week. If the PCs ask her to perform a *divination* about the current situation, she gladly does so. You should allow the PCs to come up with the question, and frame the answer such that it steers them towards a local fence named Artus (see **Event 4**); this way the party can approach Artus for information rather than waiting for him to come to them. Doing so catches Artus off guard. As a result, he

hasn't had time to properly work up a price for his services and only charges the PCs 300 gp for the information.

**Locate Object:** The wands of control water are kept in various rooms in the Kopru Ruins, deep below Cauldron. Success shows that the wands are deep underground, approximately 550 feet beneath the western gate. Unfortunately, this spell doesn't provide directions on how to reach this apparently inaccessible location, and keep in mind that lower-level casters might be out of range of the wands' location when they cast the spell, depending on where the spell is used.

**Speak with Animals/Speak with Plants:** If the PCs use this spell to interrogate the local flora and fauna near the Lucky Monkey, there's a 5% chance that the animal or plant can provide a description of Triel. Any of the hill baboons located in the Lucky Monkey can provide this description automatically, assuming their savage, hungry natures can be quelled long enough for a decent conversation.

**Speak with Dead:** The party can use this spell to interrogate fallen bandits or Tongueater without having to resort to Intimidate checks. Of course, the body does gain a saving throw to avoid the spell, and the answers are often cryptic, unclear, or repetitive. More importantly, the party can use this spell to speak with Sarcem's head. Sarcem can provide a description of Triel, and even verify that Triel took the wands from his body just before Tongueater cut off his head.

**Visiting Other Churches:** If the PCs ask about the Flood Festival tradition, Jenya (or pretty much anyone else in the city) can tell them about the festival's history as outlined in the "Adventure Background." Cunning (or paranoid) PCs no doubt become suspicious of the other three churches in Cauldron who used to help with flood control but have lately lost interest in the ritual. If this is brought to Jenya's attention, she too becomes concerned and agrees that it might be helpful to speak with representatives of the other three major churches in town.

**The Shrine of Pelor:** This small yellow tower is tended by a single 4th-level male human cleric of Pelor named Kristof Jurgensen. If he learns of the missing wands, he becomes quite concerned and makes a visit to Jenya to pledge his aid in any way that he can, but unfortunately his resources are limited. The shrine to Pelor has always been fairly small and minor in Cauldron, especially since Kristof's two superiors recently died, leaving him in charge of the entire shrine. Kristof is genuinely concerned about the situation, but he has no idea what happened to the wands.

**The Church of Kord:** The church of Kord is nearly as powerful and popular in Cauldron as the church of St. Cuthbert, if only because they sponsor numerous sporting events and demonstrations for the people of Cauldron throughout the year. This church is currently headed by a 6th-level male half-orc cleric of Kord named Asfelkir Hranleurt. He is attended by a 5th-level cleric, two 2nd-level clerics, four 1st-level clerics, and a dozen acolytes in training (1st-level commoners). These clerics are preparing for several mock combats and competitions to be held during the Flood Festival, and have little time to talk to



# Kopru Ruins

- |                             |                         |                         |                                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Overlook                  | 15 Southern Guardroom   | 29 Secret Passage       | 43 Prison                         |
| 2 Transport Cage            | 16 Workroom             | 30 Webbed Cavern        | 44 Interrogation Chamber          |
| 3 Upper Winch               | 17 Welcome Trap         | 31 Ettercap Lair        | 45 Unfinished Trap                |
| 4 Winch Operator's Barracks | 18 Guardroom            | 32 Harpoon Spider Lair  | 46 Guardroom                      |
| 5 Storage                   | 19 Storeroom            | 33 Trapped Chamber      | 47 Entrance to Tarkilar's Caverns |
| 6 The Phantom Lake          | 20 Southern Armory      | 34 Storeroom            | 48 Bone Guardian                  |
| 7 Nightmare Beach           | 21 Mess Hall            | 35 Northern Armory      | 49 Safe Cavern                    |
| 8 Kopru Lair                | 22 Barracks             | 36 Triel's Chambers     | 50 Undead Spiders                 |
| 9 Beach of Ruin             | 23 Southern Entrance    | 37 Mess Hall            | 51 Glyphs of Warding              |
| 10 Trapped Foyer            | 24 Skaven's Parlor      | 38 Meeting Room         | 52 Cult Treasury                  |
| 11 Lower Watch              | 25 Skaven's Bedchambers | 39 Thug Barracks        | 53 Rubble-filled Room             |
| 12 Main Entrance            | 26 Workroom Storage     | 40 Alleybasher Barracks | 54 Glyph Trap                     |
| 13 The Gauntlet             | 27 Spider Nest          | 41 Bloodbath            | 55 Undead Minions                 |
| 14 Northern Guardroom       | 28 Abandoned Webs       | 42 Northern Entrance    | 56 Tarkilar's Cavern              |



1 square = 10 feet

WEST



anyone about missing wands. Asfelkir himself is convinced that the lake won't flood anyway, since it hasn't flooded in over a decade. All the buildings down by the lake have been rebuilt on stilts and behind breakwaters, so there shouldn't be a problem. He doesn't know what happened to the wands, but if pressed, he drops hints that the clerics of Wee Jas might have had something to do with it. This is more because Asfelkir is trying to get the PCs off his back and has a natural dislike for the Wee Jas clerics than from any actual suspicions. In truth, the church of Wee Jas does have something to hide (see the "Campaign Seed: The Church of Wee Jas" sidebar).

**The Cathedral of Wee Jas:** This towering structure is one of the most impressive and beautiful in Cauldron. The church of Wee Jas has always been powerful in Cauldron, but not as well liked as the churches of Kord or St. Cuthbert, since the clerics of this church tend to be standoffish, curt, and even creepy. The clerics of Wee Jas are responsible for dealing with the unclaimed dead of Cauldron, and also maintain vast catacombs below their temple for anyone who's rich enough to afford the burial but doesn't have a personal crypt. Most of the dead of Cauldron are cremated.

The cathedral is run by a female human 5th-level wizard/9th-level cleric of Wee Jas named Embryl Aloustinai, although she rarely sees visitors and leaves the day-to-day operations to a male human 7th-level cleric of Wee Jas named Ike Iverson. The PCs aren't allowed to speak to Embryl, and even Ike remains aloof and uninterested in their worries. He's always viewed the Flood Festival as a waste of resources and time, and has no problems stating as such to the PCs. He's a haughty, disdainful character who doesn't think the PCs are important enough to spend more than 5 minutes talking to. He doesn't know what became of the wands, but if the PCs confront him with a description of Triel, he denies recognizing her. A successful Sense Motive check (DC 20) reveals that he's hiding something.

The cathedral is also staffed by two 5th-level clerics, three 2nd-level clerics, seven 1st-level clerics, and ten acolytes in training (1st-level commoners).

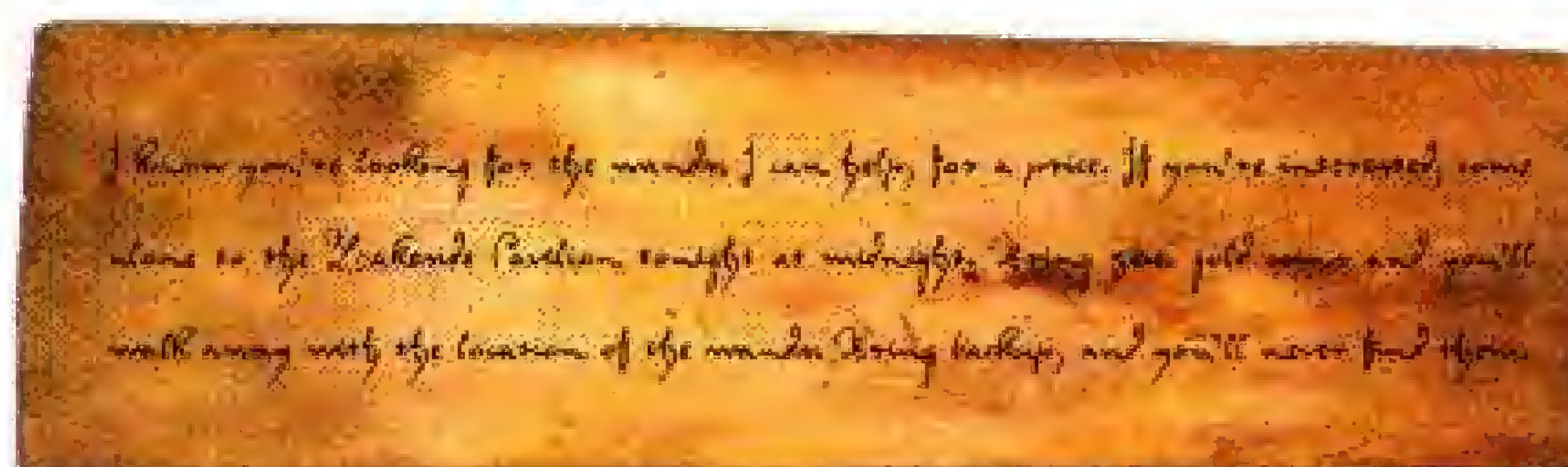
**Ad-Hoc Experience Award:** If the party manages to learn about Triel's involvement in the conspiracy, award them XPs for a CR 3 encounter. If they manage to get the location of the Kopru Ruins out of Tongueater, award them experience points for a CR 5 encounter (which helps offset the fact that they no longer need to go through Event 4 below to find the ruins).

## EVENT 4: SINISTER INFORMANT (EL 5)

Eventually, the party's questions and investigations attract the attention of Artus Shemwick, a fence and information broker extraordinaire. Artus works part time at the Tipped Tankard tavern on the lakeshore as a cook, but his real source of income is from buying gems, art objects, and minor magic items, most of which are stolen. He also brokers in rumors and information. He has numerous contacts among the low-lives of Cauldron, and it isn't long before the party's investigation comes to his attention, possibly even via first-hand observation if they ever visit the Tipped Tankard and make a point of discussing their problems aloud.

Artus makes contact with the party by having an urchin deliver a note to one of the PCs. The note is brief, and is reproduced as **Player Handout #3**.

### Player Handout #3



The Lakeside Pavilion is a large open building on the east shore of the lake; many public ceremonies take place here, but at night the place is deserted and sinister. If the PC who received the note goes there at midnight, Artus steps from the shadows to deal with him. If the PC brought backup that Artus can see, he calls off the meeting and does not make contact that night. Each night, he repeats his offer, doubling his fee each time until the PCs simply don't show up or the contacted PC finally shows up alone.

**Creature:** Artus has no intention of robbing the PC, although his methods of communication might not make that clear. If the PC honors the terms of the deal, Artus accepts the 500 gp payment and tells the character that Triel has joined forces with two other cultists (of which Artus has not been able to find out much at all) and that they plan to ransom the wands back to Cauldron after the town becomes desperate from the flooding. He also tells them that Triel and her minions have set up a base of operations in a subterranean ruin below Cauldron that can be reached by a hidden lava tube. He gives the PC a crude map of Cauldron with an "X" marked on the outer northeastern slope, about 200 feet down from the wall; this "X" marks the hidden entrance to the lava tube.

**Artus Shemwick, Male Human Rog5:** CR 5; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 5d6; hp 17; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 14; BAB +3; Grap +2; Atk +6 melee (1d4+1, masterwork punching dagger); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 14.

**Skills:** Appraise +13, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Forgery +11, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Listen +5, Profession (cook) +9, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +5, Use Magic Device +10. **Feats:** Skill Focus (Appraise), Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand), Weapon Finesse (punching dagger).

**Languages:** Human, Elven, Gnome, Halfling

**Possessions:** Heward's handy haversack, leather armor, masterwork punching dagger, 4 doses of giant wasp poison, 1 dose of striped toadstool, merchant's scale, masterwork thieves' tools, 100 cp, 290 sp, 536 gp, and 10 pp. Artus has numerous stashes of additional gold, gems, and art objects throughout the city totaling 4,300 gp to help him purchase more expensive objects, but he'll need 1d6 hours to access these additional funds if he needs them.



Artus is a fairly nondescript man in his early twenties, but this is mostly an act. He can turn on the charm with ease, and cleans up real nice when he wants to make an impression on an important client.

**Development:** Artus is loosely affiliated with the Last Laugh, and has numerous friends in Cauldron. In the weeks to come, he tries to get revenge on the PCs if they attack him and he manages to flee. He might do this by secretly poisoning food or drink they order at the Tipped Tankard. He might also have other members of the thieves' guild harass the PCs.

If the transaction goes well, Artus can become a valuable resource for the PCs throughout the campaign. His prices for information rise as his clients become more rich and powerful, and he tries to keep close tabs on his best customers so that if the need arises, he can blackmail them for additional funds or to keep them quiet about his actual source of income.

**Ad-Hoc Experience Award:** If the PCs manage to learn what Artus knows without resorting to combat, grant them experience points as if they had defeated him in combat.

## CHAPTER FOUR: INTO THE KOPRU RUINS

The PCs can find out about Triel's hideout in the caverns below Cauldron in a number of ways: they can learn of its existence from Artus, by successfully interrogating Tongueater, or through sheer luck and persistence. Characters who watch the northeastern slopes of Cauldron after dark have a chance of seeing Triel enter or exit the secret lava tube; there's a cumulative 5% chance she exits or enters the tube during any watch of at least 4 hours in length. She isn't particularly sneaky but usually operates under a *silence* spell when she exits the tunnel. The cover afforded by the terrain grants her a +2 circumstance bonus to her Hide check, bringing her total Hide check modifier to -2 (counting her armor check penalty of -5). Remember that Spot checks to notice her suffer a -1 penalty per 10 feet of distance, and stormy conditions further impact Spot checks by imposing a -8 penalty.

### THE KOPRU RUINS

Two entrances grant access to these ruins. The secret lava tube entrance connects a hidden entrance on the northeast slope of Cauldron (area 12 on the map of Cauldron) to area K1 of the ruins. It consists of a long, circular, winding, downhill passage that maintains a universal diameter of about 6 feet. The second entrance is an underwater passage that connects the Phantom Lake (area K6) to the central lake of Cauldron. This passageway also connects to several other underground lakes in the area, and is horribly complex to navigate. The most direct route between the Phantom Lake and the central lake is about 2,400 feet long and emerges into the central watery shaft at a depth of about 1,300 feet below its surface.

**Dungeon Features:** The ruins themselves are gloomy and dark, periodically lit by patches of phosphorescent fungus and

*continual flame* spells placed at key positions by the three cultists. The architecture is smooth and somewhat unsettling, looking almost like a more stable structure of dwarven design that was allowed to partially melt; all angles on the interior and exterior are smooth and curved. In many places, badly eroded carvings on the walls depict the ancient kopru enslaving other races and partaking in all forms of vile practices.

Numerous small fissures in the rock walls provide ventilation in this area. Nonetheless, the air in this entire complex is warm, humid, stale, and nasty smelling. The air won't hurt anyone who breathes it for extended periods, but it's unpleasant to smell and taste.

Unless stated otherwise, the ceilings in most artificial areas are 10 feet high. In caverns, the height increases to 20 feet, and in the outer cavern it reaches 120 feet at the highest point.

**Doors:** All the doors in the ruins are constructed of heavy stone that pivot on a central bar, allowing the door to rotate along the center and providing an opening to either side a little less than 3 feet wide. The cultists have fitted several of the more important doors with locks, but if the text doesn't say that a door is locked (or can be locked), it cannot be locked at all.

☛ **Stone Door:** 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; break DC 28.

The following encounters are keyed to the map of the Kopru Ruins:

### K1. OVERLOOK

The lava tube suddenly ends at a small ledge overlooking a vast cavern. A small pile of wooden planks is stacked on the edge of the ledge. Nearly a hundred feet below, the waters of a lake filled with dimly glowing green algae lap against cave walls encrusted with pallid fungi. A small stone building is built into the side of the ledge wall, and a pair of heavy ropes descends from a winch on the side of the building across the lake to a similar winch attached to a wooden structure on the other side of the lake. Suspended on these ropes is a rickety looking wood and iron cage mounted on a system of pulleys. The phosphorescence of the lake just barely illuminates the vast cavern, and you can see what appear to be the partially melted ruins of several buildings protruding from a sparkling wall of volcanic rock along the far wall of the cave. Several of these buildings have small doorways at ground level, but you see no windows in the ominous dark façades. The air here is thick, warm, and excessively humid.

The planks can be used to form a makeshift bridge between the hanging cage and the ledge, allowing people to cross into the cage with ease when it is retracted up to this location. Anyone who falls off the ledge drops 90 feet into the nasty green water below and takes 2d3 points of subdual damage plus 5d6 points of normal damage; a successful Swim or Tumble check (DC 20) allows the character to hit the water gracefully and negate the normal damage.



## K2. TRANSPORT CAGE

This cage can be raised or lowered between areas K1 and K9. The winches in areas K3 and K11 control the cage operation.

The cage itself looks rickety, but it can support up to three Medium creatures with no problem. Up to six Medium creatures can cram into the cage, but this runs a chance of snapping the ropes that hold the cage. Each round the cage is overloaded, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 2 per additional Medium creature in the cage over the normal limit of three) to avoid crashing into the lake below. The cage has a Fortitude save bonus of +2. The cage descends 15 feet per round (90-foot total descent), so creatures in a falling cage take less damage the closer to area K11 they are. Anyone who inspects the cage and makes a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 20) can determine the cage's safety threshold.

A character can descend the ropes without the cage with a successful Balance check (DC 18) or Climb check (DC 15).

## K3. UPPER WINCH

This room is dominated by a large winch. Operating the winch requires a successful Strength check (DC 10). Each round, the winch moves the cage at a speed of 10 feet. Since the distance between the two areas is about 60 feet, it takes 6 rounds for someone to move the cage from one location to the next. Safety features on the winch halt the progress of the cage if the operator ceases to use it before the cage reaches the other side. A successful Disable Device check (DC 20) removes this safety feature; with a result of 30 on the check, the missing safety isn't obvious. The winch also has a locking mechanism that prevents it from functioning; releasing this lock requires an Open Locks check (DC 25).

A tiny 1-foot-square circular window is set into the southern wall. Affixed to the wall next to this window is a *stone of alarm*; it can be activated by touch and removed from its mount with a successful Strength check (DC 15).

## K4. WINCH OPERATOR'S BARRACKS (EL 3)

This room contains two bunks, a table, and two chairs; the thugs prefer to pass the time playing cards or taking shifts sleeping, for the most part.

**Creatures:** Two of Triel's thugs are always stationed here; they make sure no one uses the winch to lower the cage unless they're attended by Triel or one of the other cultists. Guard duty here is considered fairly relaxing, and is usually awarded to minions who have pleased Triel in some way. Each of the thugs carries a key to lock and unlock the winch in area K3.

♣ **Narthus and Kildivy, Male Human Ftr2 (2):** hp 22, 20; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

**Tactics:** If the thugs realize that someone is trying to invade the cavern, one of them quickly makes sure that the winch in area K3 is locked down, while the other activates the *stone of alarm*, filling the main cavern with a cacophonous din and alerting the denizens of the cavern.

## K5. STORAGE

This small room contains two weeks rations and drinkable water, along with a sizable stack of replacement planks for the pile in area K1.

## K6. THE PHANTOM LAKE

The waters of this large lake glow softly with thick, ropy, glowing algae. Now and then tiny curls of steam rise from the lake, filling the area with a cloying stink of soggy plant matter. The surface of the water ripples now and again, but it's impossible to tell if these ripples come from underwater currents welling up from below, or from something more sinister. . . .

The water below the layer of algae—which grows to a depth of roughly 5 feet—is warm (around 80°F) thanks to the presence of several volcanic vents located in its bed. The phosphorescent algae provides illumination equal to that emitted by a torch, but dies quickly when removed from water or exposed to sunlight.

The lake itself is about 200 feet deep, but it has no true bottom. Rather, its bed branches into numerous aquatic waterways that wind through the rock; most of them eventually empty into the watery central shaft, but a few emerge from the sides of Cauldron to form rivers or streams.

**Development:** The lake itself is strangely free of animal life. This is due to the presence of the ravenous demon that has taken up a lair on the eastern beach (see area K7). The demon is watchful, and if it sees anyone enter the waters of the lake it quickly slithers into the water and swims out to feed.

## K7. NIGHTMARE BEACH (EL 4)

This beach is horrifying. Thick carpets of pale fungus intermingle with sheets of clotted blood and partially eaten entrails and body parts. The entire place reeks of decay.

The cultists were given a single skulvyn demon to help guard their lair by their mysterious benefactors. None of the cultists can control the demon, but they periodically throw tributes to it in the form of homeless people or criminals snatched from the alleys of Cauldron. So as long as they let it keep its territory, the skulvyn is content to leave them alone.

**Creature:** If the PCs manage to reach this beach without entering the waters of the lake, they can find the skulvyn lurking here. A skulvyn is an aquatic demon that looks like a streamlined lizard with flippers instead of feet and four long tails that end in razor sharp spines. The demon slithers out into the lake to attack anything it hears or spots in or near the water. It is savage and cruel to the core, and defends its beach with fearless rage.

♣ **Skulvyn:** CR 4; Large Outsider (Aquatic, Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar); HD 4d8+8; hp 31; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB +4; Grap +12; Atk +7 melee (1d8+4, bite) and +5 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws), or +7 melee (1d4+4 and wounding, 4 tail claws); SA slow aura, wounding; SQ DR 10/+1, outsider traits, SR 12, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7,





Will +3; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 8, Cha 11.

**Skills:** Hide -1\*, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Spot +6, Swim +19. **Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Multiattack.

**Slow Aura (Su):** Living creatures that come within 30 feet of a skulvyn must succeed at Will save (DC 12) or become slowed for 4 rounds; a creature that makes this save is immune to the skulvyn's aura for 24 hours.

**Wounding (Ex):** Wounds resulting from a skulvyn's tail lash attacks bleed for an additional 1 point of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds from such attacks result in cumulative bleeding loss; the bleeding can only be stopped by a successful Heal check (DC 15) or the application of any healing spell.

**Skills:** Skulvyns gain a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks in water.

**Tactics:** Once the skulvyn senses prey nearby, it quickly slithers into the lake since it gains a substantial bonus to its Hide check in the water. The demon swims beneath anyone near the shore or in the water to catch them in its slow aura, then surges forth to grab one victim with a grapple before retreating underwater.

## K8. KOPRU LAIR (EL 6)

This low cavern is filled with steam and thick sheets of ropy fungus. The place reeks of something rotten.

The fungus that coats the floor and walls here is thick and slippery; any bipedal creature attempting to walk on the ground

here must succeed at a Balance check (DC 12) each round to avoid slipping and falling prone. The creature that lives here can slither around on the fungus sheets with ease.

**Creature:** A lone and insane kopru has moved into this chamber, having traveled up through the lightless underwater tunnels of the Underdark, seeking the fabled ruins of its ancestors. The monster was enraged to learn that the ruins had been taken over by air-breathers, but it was wise enough to know that a frontal attack on the ruins would quickly turn sour since it was so outnumbered. Compounding its problems is the skulvyn in area K7; when the kopru first arrived here, it and the demon got into a terrible battle. The result of the fight was a draw, but only because the kopru managed to hold and constrict the demon for a couple rounds before the skulvyn broke free and retreated.

➤ **Kopru:** hp 41 (currently 38); *Monster Manual* II 134, or see the "Flood Season" Web enhancement.

**Development:** The kopru knows that it only survived its tangle with the skulvyn through luck—its normal attacks couldn't penetrate the demon's damage reduction easily. For the past few days, the monster has subsisted on the fungus in this cave while recuperating and trying to decide how to proceed.

It sees the arrival of the PCs as its greatest hope; it attempts to dominate one of them and uses its new minion to convince the other PCs to help it, first by slaying the skulvyn and then by systematically wiping out the intruders in the ruins. While the



goals of the kopru and the PCs might seem similar, the kopru has no intention of letting the PCs go once they have outlived their usefulness. Those it can't dominate it kills and eats.

## K9. BEACH OF RUIN

This large beach is covered with rocks and patches of fitfully glowing phosphorescent fungus and algae. More impressive are the stony ruins that protrude from the sheer rock wall along the beach's western edge. The architecture of these ruins seems melted and somehow intimidating—whatever creatures built these dwellings were obviously inhuman and alien in nature.

A small building made of wood sits apart from these structures; the ropes descending from the ledge on the opposite side of the lake attach to a second winch on the side of this building.

If the characters manage to reach this area without alerting the cavern, chances are that they can infiltrate any of the buildings with ease. The denizens of the ruins are confident that no one knows about their hideout and as a result don't keep a watchful eye on this beach.

## K10. TRAPPED FOYER (EL 4)

**Trap:** A low tripwire just past the arc of the northern door is triggered when a creature walks through this area. When triggered, the tripwire snaps and releases several key bits of webbing that hold the eastern wall in place, causing the entire mass of timber and wood to come crashing down in the corridor.

↗ **Falling Wall Trap:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +14 melee (6d6, falling timbers); Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 23).

## K11. LOWER WINCH

This winch operates in the same way as the one in area K3. The cultists don't normally post guards here, since they figure that the trap in area K10 is protection enough.

## K12. MAIN ENTRANCE

The ceiling of this large room rises in a 40-foot-high dome above; the floor is polished smooth. Water from condensation runs down the walls, and a pair of large braziers to the northeast and southeast provide smoky light. A long table with a dozen chairs dominate the center of the room.

Currently empty, the cultists use this chamber to meet with their mysterious benefactors; they recently delivered on their promise to construct a *Soulcage* for them and don't expect a new assignment for a while. Until then, this room sees little use.

## K13. THE GAUNTLET (EL 7)

This long vaulted hallway seems empty and harmless; in truth, it is anything but. The eastern and western ends of the corridor hide two **Traps**, and anyone standing in the "safe" central section of the corridor is subject to attack from the guards to the north and south.

**Trap:** A pair of pit traps are located at either end of the corridor. The levers in area K16 can deactivate them, but they are currently active. Each pit trap is identical and fills a 10-foot-square region. If you're feeling particularly nasty, consider using the tilt-a-pit traps from the "Life's Bazaar" Web enhancement in place of these normal pits. In such a case, assume a gnome slave of the ancient kopru enclave built the tilt-a-pits, modeling them after those from his home in Jzadirune.

↗ **20-Foot-Deep Pit Traps (2):** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; switch bypass; Reflex saving throw (DC 15) avoids; 20-ft.-deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-foot squares); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 23).

**Tactics:** As long as the complex is on alert, the Alleybashers in areas K14 and K15 keep an eye on this corridor through the arrowslits in the northern and southern walls. They fire upon any intruders they can see in the corridor.

## K14. NORTHERN GUARDROOM (EL 3)

The three Alleybashers from area K40 wait here if the complex is on alert. The northern secret door leads to area K34.

⚔ **Secret Door:** 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; break DC 28; Search DC 20.

**Creatures:** The three Alleybashers can make attacks with their arrows at any target in area K13 by utilizing the arrowslits in the wall.

⚔ **Tilavast, Oarus, and Ristikus, Alleybasher Human Rog2 (3):** hp 17, 15 ×2; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

## K15. SOUTHERN GUARDROOM (EL 3)

If the complex is on alert status, the three Alleybashers from area K22 are located here. The southern secret door leads to area K26.

**Creatures:** The three Alleybashers can make attacks with their arrows at any target in area K13 by utilizing the arrowslits in the wall.

⚔ **Samus, Iteyl, and Abernath, Alleybasher Human Rog2 (3):** hp 19, 16, 12; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

## K16. WORKROOM (EL 6)

This huge room fades into darkness. What you can see in here are several large worktables covered with bits and pieces of scrap metal. Somewhere from the depths of the room, strange skittering sounds echo off the unseen walls, but as quickly as you notice them they fade into silence.

This large room was once a kopru spawning chamber, but after the cultists moved in they cleared out the room and transformed it into a huge workroom for the construction of a *Soulcage*. They intend to keep using the room in the future for additional projects, but for now the room lies unused and mostly empty . . . except for the **Creature** that the group's benefactors left here to serve as an additional guardian.

A pair of levers located next to the doors leading into this



room can be switched to activate or deactivate the pit traps in area K13.

**Creatures:** A mud slaad lurks in the far reaches of the room.

➤ **Mud Slaad:** CR 6; Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar); HD 6d8+12; hp 46; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; BAB +6; Grap +9; Atk +9 melee (2d6+3, bite) and +7 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); SA cringe, disease, sonic screech, *summon slaad*; SQ fast healing 3, feign death, outsider traits, resistances, sonic immunity; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 8.

**Skills:** Climb +12, Jump +12, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Spot +7. **Feats:** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Multiattack.

**Cringe (Su):** As a standard action, a mud slaad can cower in fear. This is a mind-affecting effect. Any opponent attempting to strike or otherwise directly attack the cringing mud slaad, even with a targeted spell, must attempt a Will save (DC 12). If the save succeeds, the opponent can attack normally and is immune to the effect of that mud slaad's cringe for 24 hours. If the save fails, the opponent can't follow through with the attack, that part of the attacker's action is lost, and the attacker can't directly attack that mud slaad for as long as it continues to cringe. If the mud slaad stops cringing and then cringes again, the opponent may attempt a new Will save to attack it.

**Disease (Ex):** Any creature hit by a mud slaad's bite attack must succeed at a Fortitude Save (DC 15) or be infected with a disease that transforms the victim over the next week into a mud slaad. The infected creature can attempt a new save each day to throw off the infection.

**Feign Death (Ex):** If an opponent strikes a mud slaad and reduces it to 10 or fewer hit points, it can immediately attempt to feign death. This ability happens on the opponent's turn. Any creature that witnesses a mud slaad that is feigning death, including those creatures that watch it fall, can make a Sense Motive check (DC 22) to determine if the slaad's death is genuine. A cursory check will not reveal that the slaad's death is feigned, and even a Heal or Search check isn't guaranteed to discover the deception, so adroit is the mud slaad at stilling its breathing and reducing its heart rate. A successful check with either skill (DC 22) is required to reveal that the mud slaad still lives.

**Resistances (Ex):** All slaadi have acid, cold, electricity, and fire resistance 5.

**Sonic Screech (Su):** Once per day a mud slaad can emit a tremendous screech. Every creature within 30 feet must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or take 5d6 points of sonic damage.

**Summon Slaad (Sp):** Once per day, a mud slaad can attempt to summon one mud slaad with a 40% chance of success, or one red slaad with a 20% chance of success.

**Tactics:** The mud slaad, despite its appearance, harbors deep feelings of inferiority and shame after eons spent being tormented and mocked by more powerful slaadi. It lives in constant fear that more slaadi could appear at any moment to torture it, so it will not summon a red slaad, and it only attempts to call another mud slaad if it is in dire peril (it drops to fewer than 10 hit points and its cringe ability is ineffective). It prefers to open combat with its screech and then flail away with its bite and claws. If hard pressed, it feigns death and hopes its tormentors wander away.

**Development:** A character who examines the bits of metal and tools lying about this room and makes a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) can tell that this room was used to build some sort of magic device, most likely something connected to the schools of Conjuraton, Abjuration, and Necromancy. Beyond this, though, nothing can be learned from investigating the remains.

**Treasure:** The slaad keeps its treasures wrapped in a ragged cloak in the far end of the room under a table; a Search check (DC 15) reveals it. This trove consists of 150 pp, three gems (600 gp, 100 gp, and 6 gp), and a masterwork lute (100 gp). Unknown to the mud slaad, the rag it wraps its treasure in is its greatest possession: a cloak of arachnida.



Tarkilar and Skaven



## K17. WELCOME TRAP (EL 1)

Hundreds of thin white cords stretch from wall to wall in this chamber, all about 6 inches off the ground. The cords make a tangled sheet, and it looks nearly impossible to pass through the room without stumbling.

This room seems unused, but it actually contains a **Trap**.

**Trap:** The floor of this room is criss-crossed with tightly strung ettercap webs. The cultists and their minions know which parts of the floor are safe to tread upon, but anyone who walks carelessly into the room triggers the **Trap**. This causes a large ettercap web to drop from the ceiling, covering a 10-foot square area. The web has tiny bells attached to it, so the triggering of the trap alert the guards on duty in area K18.

✦ **Falling Web Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex saving throw (DC 15); entangles (Escape Artist, DC 20, or Strength check, DC 26, to escape); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 21).

## K18. GUARDROOM (EL 6)

This room contains a table and several chairs, along with the **Creatures**.

**Creatures:** Four thugs lurk here, playing a complicated dice game, arguing loudly, and waiting for their shift to end.

✦ **Kristoff, Mathus, Stysai, and Jestie, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (4):** hp 25, 23, 20 ×2; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details. Each of these thugs carries one flask of alchemist's fire.

**Tactics:** If the guards hear the trap triggered in area K17, one of their number heads south to alert the other cultists while the remaining three open the door to area K17 and begin to throw vials of alchemist's fire into the room on trapped PCs. Once each has thrown a vial, they close and block the door by pushing the table up against it. Once the door between rooms K17 and K18 is blocked, its Break DC increases to 30.

## K19. STOREROOM

This room contains two weeks of dried food rations and drinking water kept in large barrels.

## K20. SOUTHERN ARMORY

The walls of this room are loaded with weapon and armor racks. Swords and bows hang from pegs, and a dozen suits of armor hang on the far wall. A barrel of arrows and two small wooden kegs sit behind the armor stands.

The door to this room is locked (Open Locks, DC 30); Skaven has the key. The small kegs hold cheap ale.

**Treasure:** The weapon racks contain 12 longswords, 6 rapiers, and 8 longbows. A barrel in the corner holds 120 arrows. The armor stands hold nine suits of studded leather armor and four suits of chainmail. The ale is particularly cheap (5 gp per barrel) and hardly worth the cost of transport. Skaven uses the ale to reward the mercenaries who work for him.

## K21. MESS HALL

This room contains a table and several chairs. A cabinet against one wall contains wooden eating utensils, plates, and the like.

Off-duty bandits use this room to eat, relax, and gamble, unlike their guard posts, which they use just to gamble. No one occupies this room right now.

## K22. BARRACKS (EL 4)

This room contains several bunks. It looks like about a dozen people could sleep here.

**Creatures:** The bandits who work directly for Skaven sleep in these bunks. A Search check (DC 15) reveals that eleven human-sized individuals quarter here.

✦ **Samus, Iteyl, and Abernath, Alleybasher Human Rog2 (3):** hp 19, 16, 12; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

**Development:** If the complex has been alerted, these Alleybashers have relocated to area K15. Otherwise, they are asleep here when the party enters the room.

## K23. SOUTHERN ENTRANCE (EL 5)

This chamber seems to be some sort of meeting room; a large table with a dozen chairs sit in the center of the room.

**Creatures:** A pair of thugs and a pair of Alleybashers can be found in this room.

✦ **Makrity and Chyles, Male Human Ftr2 (2):** hp 20, 19; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

✦ **Klarkus and Blare, Alleybasher Male and Female Human Rog2 (2):** hp 18, 13; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

**Tactics:** If the alarm has been raised, the mercenaries have upended the table to give them partial cover; the Alleybashers have readied actions to fire upon anyone who comes through the northeast door, and the thugs aid their Armor Classes with the aid another action by blocking attacks with their shields. The hired swords spring into melee should intruders get close enough to attack.

## K24. SKAVEN'S PARLOR (EL 3 OR 8)

The door to this room is kept locked with an *arcane lock* cast by Skaven; a successful Open Locks check (DC 40) can unlock it. Without the *arcane lock*, the door still requires an Open Locks check (DC 30) or one of Skaven's keys to open it.

This room is like a breath of fresh air. While still a little warm, the air is dry and nowhere near as foul in here. A well-made desk sits against the opposite wall, which looks like it has been partially melted by an ancient lava flow. A bookshelf sits against the northern wall, and the room is well lit by a softly glowing *continual flame* that hangs from a chain set into the ceiling.



This room and the room directly to the north are the personal quarters of one of the three cultists responsible for the theft of the *wands of control water*.

**Creatures:** Skaven Umbermead is actually not a cleric like his two fellow cultists. Although he's trained as a wizard (specifically, as a diviner), his faith in his deity is as strong and devout as that of his fellow cultists. What his fellow conspirators don't know is that Skaven worships Vecna. Triel has always assumed he worships Ollidammara, and although Tarkilar no longer cares, he used to think Skaven worshiped Nerull.

Skaven can be found in this room if the complex isn't on alert; otherwise, he is in area K32. If he is encountered here, he is sitting at his desk poring over some ancient scrolls.

The air quality in this room and in area K25 is the result of the work of a Medium air elemental that Skaven bound to these rooms using a scroll of *lesser planar binding* several months ago. The elemental is ordered to maintain air quality in here and to defend it from anyone but Skaven who tries to touch any of the books or scrolls on the shelves in here or in area K25.

✦ **Skaven Umbermead, Male Halfling Div7:** CR 7; Medium Humanoid (halfling); HD 7d4+7; hp 30; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; BAB +3; Grap -3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+2, masterwork dagger) or +6 ranged (damage varies, ranged touch); SA spells; SQ familiar, halfling traits; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 6, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 10.

**Skills:** Concentration +11, Craft (metalworking) +14, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +4\*, Move Silently +5, Spellcraft +14, Spot +4\*. **Feats:** Alertness (as long as Pywakit is within arm's reach), Combat Expertise, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge—arcana), Spell Focus (Evocation).

\*Includes +2 bonus from Alertness (granted by familiar).

**Spells Prepared** (4/6/5/4/3, base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*detect poison*\*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*; 1st—*chill touch*, *comprehend languages*\*, *hold portal*, *magic missile*\*\* ×2, *true strike*\*; 2nd—*detect thoughts*\*, *ghoul touch*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray*\*\*, *see invisibility*\*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*\*, *displacement*, *lightning bolt*\*\*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*arcane eye*\*, *enervation*, *phantasmal killer*.

**Spellbook:** Skaven's spellbook contains all the spells he has prepared, plus the following: 0—all cantrips (except *daze*); 1st—*alarm*, *arcane lock*, *burning hands*\*\*, *detect secret doors*\*, *detect undead*\*, *identify*\*, *mage armor*, *silent image*, *unseen servant*; 2nd—*arcane lock*, *blindness/deafness*, *blur*, *locate object*\*, *scare*, *spider climb*, *summon monster II*, *whispering wind*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *gentle repose*, *sepia snake sigil*, *tongues*\*, *water breathing*; 4th—*locate creature*\*, *shout*\*\*, *fear*.

\*Divination spell. Skaven's prohibited school is Enchantment.

\*\*Evocation spell. The base save DC for these spells, where applicable, is 16 + spell level.

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Halfling.

**Possessions:** Bracers of armor +1, goggles of minute seeing, slippers of spider climbing, pearl of power (1st level), wand of mage armor (40 charges), potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of gaseous form, six

*potions of hiding*, masterwork dagger, leather pouch containing 58 gp and 4 pp, key ring (contains keys to the winches at areas K3 and K11, the key to area K20, and keys to areas K24 and K25). He also carries one of the eight *wands of control water*.

✦ **Pywakit, Cat Familiar:** Tiny Magical Beast; HD special; hp 15; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16; BAB +3; Grap -9; Atk +5 melee (1d2+4, 2 claws) and +0 melee (1d3+4, bite); SA channel touch spells; SQ improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, speak with master, speak with cats; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skaven is mysterious and introverted. He's bald, keeps his beard trimmed neatly, and has a dark complexion. Still, while handsome, he has little concept of social graces and would rather avoid contact with others. He tends to let the Alleybashers and thugs that work for him do as they please, as long as they don't disturb his studies. He eschews weaponplay and combat, and he doesn't openly wear a symbol of Vecna, keeping his faith a secret. Much of the design of the *Soulcage* was Skaven's work. Aside from his cat familiar, Pywakit, Skaven prefers the company of the ettercaps and spiders.

**Tactics:** Skaven prefers to avoid combat. If attacked, he attempts to escape the room by turning invisible or using one of his *potions of hiding*. If he manages to escape, he heads to area K32 to enlist the aid of the harpoon spider against the PCs. If unable to escape, Skaven uses his combat spells in an attempt to scatter the PCs and enable his flight to the harpoon spider.

✦ **Medium Air Elemental:** hp 23; *Monster Manual* 81.

**Treasure:** The numerous books and scrolls found here cover a range of topics and are written in a variety of languages. One common theme binds them together: mystery. Skaven is obsessed with mysteries and spends long hours poring over ancient texts of unexplained events. The scrolls currently on his desk are partial histories of the kopru that built this ruined city. This collection of books and scrolls is worth 1,200 gp to the right buyer, but if the PCs decide to keep them, they could possibly use them to research mysteries encountered later in the campaign.

## K25. SKAVEN'S BEDCHAMBERS (EL 6)

The door to this room has been *arcane locked* by Skaven; an Open Locks check (DC 40) can unlock it. Without the *arcane lock*, the door lock still requires an Open Lock check (DC 30) or one of Skaven's keys to open. The door also bears a **Trap**.

This room, like the last one, is fairly cool and dry—and comfortable. A bed sits against the north wall, and a thick carpet covers most of the floor. More bookshelves line the walls here, their shelves sagging with books, tomes, and scrolls of all shapes and sizes.

**Traps:** Skaven has used his magic to ward this room. Aside from the *arcane lock* on the door, he has placed a *sepia snake sigil* on the door. The false back to the eastern bookshelf (see *Treasure*, below) is also warded by a *sepia snake sigil*.

✦ **Sepia Snake Sigils (2):** CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*sepia snake sigil*, 7th-level wizard, Reflex save, DC 16, negates); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).



**Treasure:** The back of the top shelf of the eastern bookcase can be pulled out, as revealed by a successful Search check (DC 25). The removable back is warded with a *sepia snake sigil*. In the hollow beyond the false back are two valuable objects: Skaven's spellbook and one of the *wands of control water*.

## K26. WORKROOM STORAGE

This large room was used to store extra supplies for the workroom (area K16); it's currently empty. The secret door to the north can be discovered with a successful Search check (DC 20).

## K27. SPIDER NEST (EL 3)

The door to this room is more difficult to open than most others; it's Break DC is 30 due to the webs on the other side.

This room is clogged with webs; it is impossible to see the full extent of the chamber. Peering through the strands of sticky webbing, you spot a dark, bulbous shape scuttling across the filaments in your direction.

**Creatures:** Six small monstrous spiders lurk at various points in this room; they quickly skitter forth to attack anyone foolish enough to open the door to this room.

➤ **Small Monstrous Spiders (6):** hp 8, 6, 5, 5, 4, 3; *Monster Manual* 210.

## K28. ABANDONED WEBS

The corners of this room are clogged with webbing, but a 5-foot-wide, 8-foot-tall tunnel leads south into a web-lined tunnel.

The webs here and in the caves beyond coat every inch of floor, wall, and ceiling. Although most of the webbing is no longer sticky, it is quite soft. All creatures in this room and areas K30–K32 gain a +4 circumstance bonus on Move Silently checks.

## K29. SECRET PASSAGE

Both of the secret doors that allow access to this passageway are masterfully hidden and require Search checks (DC 25) to discover.

## K30. WEBBED CAVERN (EL 6)

The air in this cavern is thick, stuffy, and humid, and stinks of rotting fungus. Sheets of thick white webs choke every surface, and coils of the sticky stuff hang from above in thick ropy sheets. The webbing muffles sound, making the cavern seem much smaller than it actually is. In fact, the thick webs make it quite difficult to accurately judge the size of the chamber, or what might be lurking in its depths.

**Creatures:** Five monstrous spiders nest in this cavern. If combat here lasts more than 4 rounds, the two ettercaps from area K31 arrive on the fifth round to aid their spider allies.

➤ **Medium-Size Monstrous Spiders (4):** hp 14, 12, 11, 10; *Monster Manual* 210.

➤ **Large Monstrous Spiders (2):** hp 28, 22; *Monster Manual* 210.

**Trap:** Several portions of the floor in this room consist of fresh, sticky webbing. Each round a character who doesn't know the safe routes in the chamber moves more than 5 feet, the character must make a Reflex saving throw to avoid becoming stuck.

➤ **Sticky Webs:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; Reflex saving throw (DC 15) to avoid; entangles (Escape Artist, DC 26, or Strength check, DC 32, to break, 12 hit points per 5-foot section); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22).

**Treasure:** The spiders have collected a fair amount of treasure. It's shrouded in a ball of webbing, and a successful Search check (DC 24) is necessary to locate it. The treasure consists of 620 gp, 4 pearls (100 gp each), an arcane scroll of *summon monster I* (1st-level caster), a *potion of clairaudience/clairvoyance*, and a *wand of burning hands* (1st-level caster, 23 charges).

## K31. ETTERCAP LAIR (EL 6)

The floor of this cavern is trapped with masses of sticky webs, as detailed in area K30.

**Creatures:** A sizable nest of ettercaps lurks in this room, although only two of them can be encountered here at this time. They rush to the aid of the spiders in area K30 when they hear sounds of battle.

➤ **Ettercaps (2):** hp 28, 27; *Monster Manual* 88.

**Tactics:** The ettercaps use the sticky webs in this cave to their advantage, luring intruders into sticky sections of floor or bull rushing them into sticky walls as the opportunity presents itself. If they begin to lose the battle, they quickly flee to the east to area K32 and alert the harpoon spider there.

## K32. HARPOON SPIDER LAIR (EL 7 OR HIGHER)

The spiderwebs in this cave are thick and tangled, hanging from the unseen roof above in coiling sheets. Large mounds of webs lie heaped on the floor, almost like sand dunes. The air in this cave is stale, hot, and stinks of decaying fungus.

Like areas K30 and K31, the floor of this cave is dotted with sticky spider webs.

**Creatures:** A dangerous predator from the Underdark known as a harpoon spider has lived in this cavern for some time, trapped here when a lava tube that led into this cave collapsed. The harpoon spider lived for some time on the indigenous bats and fish in the main cave, but eventually a tiny group of ettercaps and their spider allies found a way here. The ettercaps, amazed by the harpoon spider, worship it as a god, tending to its every need. One of the three ettercaps in the group can always be found by the harpoon spider's side.

If the complex is on alert, Skaven retreats to this cave. Skaven and the harpoon spider have become friends over the past several months; the spider is intrigued by Skaven's tales of Vecna, while Skaven finds the harpoon spider an amazing creature and wants to know all he can about the subterranean predator.

➤ **Harpoon Spider:** hp 36; see Appendix I for details.

➤ **Ettercap:** hp 26; *Monster Manual* 88.



**Treasure:** The spider keeps its valuables encased in a niche near the ceiling in the easternmost cul-de-sac in this cave; characters searching this area specifically can discover it with a successful Search check (DC 25). The treasure consists of 500 sp, 450 gp, a darkwood and silver masterwork lap harp (800 gp), a diamond ring (5,000 gp), a jade idol of Yondalla (700 gp), a +1 small steel shield, a *potion of hiding*, and *bracers of armor* +2. Skaven has also entrusted one of the *wands of control water* to the harpoon spider's treasure for safe keeping.

### K33. TRAPPED CHAMBER (EL 5)

This chamber looks empty, except for a thick layer of dust on the floor.

**Trap:** This trap is triggered whenever the door in the northwest corner of the room is opened. Dozens of holes then open in the ceiling and floor, and a forest of rapier-thin poison spikes lance out of these holes to impale anything in the room. The spikes retract into the wall and the door closes itself after 1 round, at which point the trap automatically resets.

➤ **Poison Spike Trap:** CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +16 melee (1d8+4 plus poison, spike); multiple targets (all creatures in area K33); poison (Medium spider venom, Fortitude save, DC 14, resists, 1d4 Str/1d6 Str); Search (DC 17); Disable Device (DC 21).

### K34. STOREROOM

This room contains two weeks of dried food rations and drinking water kept in large barrels. The secret door to the south can be discovered with a successful Search check (DC 20).

### K35. NORTHERN ARMORY

The door to this room is locked (Open Locks, DC 30); Triel has the key. The east and west walls of this room are dominated by weapon racks and armor stands. A wine rack with several unopened bottles sits against the southern wall.

**Treasure:** The weapon racks contain 7 longswords, 5 rapiers, and 11 longbows. The armor stands hold three suits of studded leather armor and six suits of chainmail. Each of the seventeen bottles of wine on the rack is worth 50 gp.

### K36. TRIEL'S CHAMBERS (EL 7 OR HIGHER)

This large room is elegantly appointed and, if anything, even more humid and cloying than the other chambers. The reason is probably due to the large pool of bubbling water in the southern end of the room. A hammock swings to the west of the pool above a large chest, and the northern portion of the room seems to have been converted into a small combat training ground, complete with thick mats and combat dummies.

The door to this room is locked (Open Locks, DC 30); Triel has the key. The door also contains a **Trap**.

This room is the personal quarters to Triel Eldurast, the cultist most directly responsible for the death of Sarcem and the theft of the *wands of control water*.

**Creature:** Triel can be found in this room whether or not the alarm has been raised; she prefers to spend most of her time here when she isn't working. If the complex is on alert, she is attended by four Alleybashers.

☛ **Triel Eldurast, Female Human Ftr4/Clr3:** CR 7; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 4d10+4 plus 3d8+3; hp 55; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; BAB +6/+1; Grap +10; Atk +12/+7 (1d10+9, +1 silver heavy flail); SA spells, rebuke/command undead; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 17.

**Skills:** Bluff +4, Concentration +11\*, Craft (metalworking) +6, Diplomacy +4, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Spellcraft +6. **Feats:** Cleave, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Leadership, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Weapon Specialization (heavy flail).

\*Includes +4 bonus from Combat Casting.

**Spells Prepared** (4/4/3; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* ×2, *guidance*, *mending*; 1st—*cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *magic weapon*\*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *silence*, *shatter*\*.

\*Domain Spell. **Domains:** Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 to attack; +3 to damage), War (free Weapon Focus—heavy flail feat).

**Languages:** Common, Gnoll.

**Possessions:** Spiked+1 full plate, +1 silver heavy flail, 3 *wands of control water*, *wand of cure serious wounds* (7 charges, 5th-level caster), 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, *divine scroll* (*cure moderate wounds*, *hold person*, 3rd-level caster), *everburning torch*, silver holy symbol of Hextor, leather pouch containing 30 gp and 4 pp, key ring.

Triel is quite fond of the martial aspects of Hextor's teachings, and often wears facial warpaint similar to that worn by her cohort Tongueater. She has short but wild red hair, and she wears a suit of full plate festooned with spikes and the symbol of Hextor. Of the three cultists, she is easily the most beautiful and charismatic, and as a result she's the one they rely on to take care of things outside of the Kopru Ruins. She was once a city guard in Cauldron, but her growing bloodlust eventually got her into trouble. She fled the city for several years and eventually became a cleric of Hextor before joining the Ebon Triad.

☛ **Meryin, Sorkalath, Durkal, and Pindinson, Alley-basher Human Rog2 (4):** hp 19, 16, 15, 12; see area Mx of the Lucky Monkey for details.

**Tactics:** If the PCs have managed to invade this far without triggering an alert, they find Triel naked and enjoying a soak in her hot spring; she responds to unwelcome intrusions with great anger and attacks at once, despite her lack of armor. If only one PC enters, she might try to seduce the character into joining her in the pool, at which point she'll try to drown the gullible fool before suiting up and stalking through the complex looking for other intruders.

If the complex is on alert, Triel is ready to unleash pain on



anyone foolish enough to invade this room; she has also called the four Alleybashers from area K42 to her room for assistance. She casts *bull's strength* and *shield of faith* on herself, given time, then wades into combat, flail swinging, targeting opposing clerics before others. She pauses to heal herself if reduced to 20 hit points or less.

**Trap:** Anyone who tries to pass through the door without depressing a cleverly hidden switch on the exposed upper rim of the door (Search check, DC 30) suddenly finds the revolving door swinging shut while numerous razors extend from both its edges. If the door trap hits the character, he becomes pinned in place until the door is forced open (Strength check, DC 28) or he makes an Escape Artist check (DC 26).

✦ **Razordoor Trap:** CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +15 melee (1d12+8/×3 plus pinning); Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 27).

**Treasure:** Triel prefers to carry her treasure with her, but when she sleeps or is bathing she keeps it stacked in the large chest under her hammock. This chest can be locked (Open Locks, DC 30) with a key she carries.

**Ad-Hoc Experience Award:** If the party defeats an unarmed Triel, award them 80% the normal experience point total due to her reduced Armor Class.

### K37. MESS HALL (EL 6)

This room is a combination mess hall and lounge used by Triel's minions to relax and unwind when they get the chance.

**Creatures:** Six thugs can be found here; if the alarm has been raised they are alert and ready for action.

✦ **Thistle, Adjar, Pyrus, Sukoro, Zoth, and Lonjiku, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (6):** hp 22, 20×2, 19, 18×2; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

### K38. MEETING ROOM

This unremarkable room is used by Triel to meet with her minions and hand out daily orders. A plain looking table and some uncomfortable chairs sit in the center; and several broken chairs are stacked in the corners of the room.

### K39. THUG BARRACKS (EL 5)

This room contains several bunks; A dozen people could sleep here, although not all the beds look lived in.

**Creatures:** The thugs who work directly for Triel sleep in these bunks. A successful Search check (DC 15) determines that ten human-sized people sleep here.

✦ **Milo, Hamfist, Mari, and Eirlinaki, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (4):** hp 25, 22, 18, 17; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

**Development:** If the complex has been alerted to the PCs, this room is empty and these thugs wait in area K46. Otherwise, the four thugs are asleep when the party enters the room.

### K40. ALLEYBASHER BARRACKS (EL 4)

More bunks fill this chamber. A quick glance reveals that while several people probably live here, the room could accommodate more people than currently use the chamber.

**Creatures:** The Alleybashers working directly for Triel sleep in these bunks. A successful Search check (DC 15) determines that seven Alleybashers sleep here.

✦ **Tilavast, Oarus, and Ristikus, Alleybasher Human Rogz (3):** hp 17, 15×2; see area M1 of the Lucky Monkey for details.

**Development:** If the complex has been alerted to the PCs, this room is empty, its denizens stationed at area K14. Otherwise, three Alleybashers sleep here when the party enters the room.

### K41. BLOODBATH (EL 5)

This room seems to be empty of anything of interest, but in truth, it holds a dangerous **Trap**—an illusory floor covers a large pit in the center of the room. A 3-foot-wide ledge winds around the edges of the room, providing the only safe place to walk. The pit is filled with water and a swarm of creatures.

**Trap:** The center of this room is actually a 20-foot-deep pit filled with 10 feet of water. Falling in the pit won't hurt unless the victim is encumbered or can't swim. Of course, the monsters that lurk in the water are much more dangerous.

✦ **20-Foot-Deep Water filled pit:** CR 1; magical; constant effect; illusory floor covering pit; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 20 feet deep with 10 ft. water; Search (DC 24).

**Creature:** The water is filled with a hungry swarm of bloodbloater oozes. Bloodblockers are Diminutive aquatic oozes that feed on blood. Individually they pose little threat, but they have a propensity to swarm in huge clouds of hungry protoplasm.

✦ **Bloodbloater Ooze Swarm:** CR 1; Medium Ooze (Aquatic, Swarm of Diminutive Oozes); HD 2d10+12; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 5 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk swarm (1d6 plus 1 Str damage/0); SA blood drain, distraction; SQ amphibious, blindsight 60 ft., fire vulnerability, ooze traits, swarm traits; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will -5; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 22, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

**Skills:** Swim +8.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** On each round a bloodbloater swarm does at least 1 point of damage to a victim, it also drains blood and causes 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any nonmindless creature vulnerable to the swarm's damage that begins its turn with the swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a successful Fortitude save negates the effect (DC 10). Spellcasting or concentrating on spells in a swarm requires a successful Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills requiring patience and concentration in the swarm also requires a successful Concentration check (DC 20).

**Swarm Traits:** The bloodbloater swarm is not subject to critical hits or flanking. It is immune to mind-affecting spells, damage from all weapons, and to single target spells. It is vulnerable to area effects like alchemist's fire or spells like *burning hands*.



Although the swarm is Medium, it does not threaten nearby squares; it must enter a creature's square to attack (this provokes an attack of opportunity from the target). If the attacked creature does nothing but defend itself, the swarm does no damage; otherwise it automatically deals its listed swarm damage.

**Treasure:** Triel tossed one of the *wands of control water* into this pit for safe keeping. When she wants to retrieve it, she can simply use another wand to lower the water to an inch or two deep and snatch the wand from the relatively helpless landlocked blood-bloaters with a quick and well-gauntleted hand.

## K42. NORTHERN ENTRANCE (EL 6)

This room seems fairly empty and clean, but like many other rooms in the ruins, it contains a dangerous trap. The ceiling in this room is 40 feet up, and a 5-foot-wide balcony runs around the rim of the room 20 feet above ground. A knotted rope that can be lowered to provide access to the balcony has been pulled up by the **Creatures** hiding above.

**Creatures:** Four Alleybashers lurk on the balcony surrounding this room. PCs can make Spot checks (DC 33) to detect the waiting rogues.

✦ **Meryin, Sorkalath, Durkal, and Pindinson, Alley-basher Human Rogz (4):** hp 19, 16, 15, 12; see area **M1** of the Lucky Monkey for details.

**Tactics:** The mercenaries fire arrows at any intruders that enter the room, although they wait and see if opponents first set off the trap. Characters who bypass the footshredder aren't attacked until the last PC has entered the room.

**Development:** If the caves are on alert, these rogues have joined Triel in area **K36**.

**Trap:** Anyone who opens the western door triggers this room's trap. Doing so causes the floor of the room to retract 6 inches down, revealing a forest of tiny spikes designed to shred the sole of the foot.

↗ **Footshredder Floor:** CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; multiple targets (all in contact with the floor of area **K42**); Atk +14 melee; any creature struck suffers 1d4 points of damage and is wounded as if by caltrops; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 23).

## K43. PRISON

This room contains four small cages. Each can be locked with keys carried by Triel or with a successful Open Locks check (DC 30). These cages are used to hold prisoners of the cult, but they are all currently empty. PCs captured by the cult probably end up in one of these cages.

## K44. INTERROGATION CHAMBER

This room contains a desk, a chair, and a strange apparatus that looks like a wooden bed covered with various iron straps and spikes. The device looks . . . uncomfortable.

The device is a torture rack designed to painfully stretch the person strapped into it. Triel uses this room to interrogate pris-

oners. Although no one is currently held here, PCs who are unlucky enough to be captured might end up in this device. If you have access to the *Book of Vile Darkness*, treat this device as a masterwork rack, otherwise assume that each round a character spends on the rack, he suffers 1 point of damage. A successful Escape Artist check (DC 22) is required to escape.

## K45. UNFINISHED TRAP

The floor of this room is rough and unfinished, and seems to be pockmarked with hundreds of tiny holes drilled into the floor. There is no indication as to the purpose of these holes, but it must have taken someone months of mind-numbing work to drill them all.

Triel is in the process of building a second footshredder trap (see area **K42**) here, but she can't quite get the logistics of the project down and has given up on it for now. PCs in a hurry might waste valuable time trying to figure out what kind of weird trap awaits them in this chamber.

## K46. GUARDROOM (EL 5)

**Creatures:** If the complex is on alert, Triel has posted the four thugs from area **K39** to guard this route toward the treasury. The thugs do their best to prevent intruders from penetrating any further into the complex via this route.

✦ **Milo, Hamfist, Mari, and Eirlinaki, Male and Female Human Ftrz (4):** hp 25, 22, 18, 17; see area **M1** of the Lucky Monkey for details.

## K47. ENTRANCE TO TARKILAR'S CAVERNS

This long room is partially collapsed. The northwestern portion has been destroyed by an ancient lava flow, but two circular lava tubes seem to provide access to the caves beyond.

The network of caves here (areas **K48–K56**) are the domain of the third cultist, Tarkilar. Since Tarkilar became a huecuva, he has become less interested in aiding his one-time companions, and more interested in fostering his hatred of the living. Someday soon he might finally forget his old alliances and seek out his old allies to satiate his growing hatred of the living.

## K48. BONE GUARDIAN (EL 7)

**Creature:** Before Tarkilar was transformed into a huecuva several months ago, he managed to get his hands on a high-level *animate dead* scroll. He found the remains of a dead gargantuan tyrannosaurus in the foothills to the east of Cauldron, and over the course of several weeks smuggled the skeleton into this chamber, bone by bone. He then reassembled the skeleton and used the *animate dead* scroll to create a gargantuan skeleton.

↗ **Gargantuan Tyrannosaurus Skeleton:** hp 123; *Monster Manual* 165.

**Tactics:** The undead tyrannosaur can't move well, and it pretty much takes up the entire room with its bulk. It cannot



pursue creatures out of this room, but it has enough reach that it doesn't have to move far to be an effective guardian.

## K49. SAFE CAVERN

The fairly narrow passage leading to this chamber is too small for the tyrannosaur skeleton to reach into. A PC who makes it to this cave might be able to do significant damage to the skeleton from the safety of this room.

## K50. UNDEAD SPIDERS (EL 5)

The stink in this cavern is overwhelming. Sticky pools of congealed fluid lie in depressions in the floor, having drained from several rotting giant spider carcasses that have been pushed up against the northwest wall.

**Creatures:** Once in a while, some of the spiders in the southern caves curl up and die. Every time this happened, Tarkilar used his *wand of animate dead* (which has long since run out of charges) to animate the dead spider as a zombie before leading it back to this room and releasing it from his control. Currently, six Large monstrous spider zombies lurk in this room.

➤ **Large Monstrous Spider Zombies (6):** hp 35, 33, 31, 30, 27, 22; *Monster Manual* 192.

## K51. GLYPHS OF WARDING (EL 6)

**Trap:** Triel recently purchased two scrolls of *glyph of warding* and used them to ward the exits to this cavern. Each glyph is identical, and triggers when an intruder passes over it.

➤ **Glyphs of Warding:** CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast], 5th level cleric, Reflex save, DC 14, half damage, 2d8 sonic); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

## K52. CULT TREASURY (EL 8)

This cave glitters and glows; the volcanic rock here has formed millions of tiny black and red crystals that catch the light from a *continual flame* near the door and reflect it back a millionfold. The one thing that doesn't glitter is a large slab of dull black stone in the center of the room.

The slab of hardened lava in the middle of the chamber was originally naturally formed, but the cultists found its remote location and size intriguing enough that they hired a pair of dwarves (who were later used to create the **Creatures** that guard this place) to transform the block of stone into a clever chest. A successful Search check (DC 25) determines that the top of the stone slab is hinged and can be opened. Doing so triggers the **Trap** and reveals the cult's **Treasure**.

**Creatures:** The two dwarves the cultists hired to build the chest were rewarded with two rare gifts Tarkilar procured at great expense: a pair of worms harvested from a spawn of Kyuss. Tarkilar implanted the worms into the two dwarves after chaining them to the chest, and then watched in glee as the worms transformed the dwarves into undead mockeries of their

former selves. Tarkilar then used his ability to command undead to force the new spawn to serve as guardians.

Unfortunately, when Tarkilar accidentally transformed himself into a huecuva, he lost control of the spawn. Neither Skaven nor Triel could command them, and since that fateful day three months ago, none of them has been able to approach the treasury. Triel eventually planned to steal the *wands of control water* and then ransom them back to earn enough money to buy some items capable of controlling the spawn as well as Tarkilar. In the meantime, Triel had a +1 *silver heavy flail* constructed (she currently wields it) in case the huecuva went berserk.

In the meantime, the two spawn of Kyuss are content to lurk here, attacking anything that has the misfortune of entering.

➤ **Spawn of Kyuss (2):** hp 33, 29; *Monster Manual* II 186, or see the "Flood Season" Web enhancement.

**Trap:** The chest is coated with a thin layer of nitharit poison.

➤ **Poisoned Chest:** CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; poison (nitharit, Fortitude save, DC 13, resists, 0/3d6 Con); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 19).

**Treasure:** The chest contains several leather sacks filled with coins: 15,500 cp, 8,000 sp, 4,500 gp, and 200 pp. Most of this consists of payment for the successful creation of the *Soulcage*.

## K53. RUBBLE-FILLED ROOM

The floor of this large cavern is nearly completely covered by a partial cave-in that created a huge mound of loose debris in the center of the room. You can see a few hands and legs protruding from the rubble.

This cave-in happened about the time Tarkilar was transformed into a huecuva. The resulting shockwave of energy triggered a collapse in the already weak ceiling of this cavern, destroying several zombies and skeletons Tarkilar had stationed here to prevent interruptions to his ritual.

Clambering over the rubble is possible with a successful Climb or Balance check (DC 15); the rubble prevents a PC in this room from safely using ranged weapons to attack the tyrannosaur skeleton in area K48 without being in range of the skeleton's 20-foot reach.

## K54. GLYPH TRAP (EL 4)

**Trap:** Tarkilar warded the narrow passageway between areas K54 and K55 with a single *glyph of warding* before he was transformed.

➤ **Glyph of Warding:** CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blindness], Fortitude save, DC 16, negates); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

## K55. UNDEAD MINIONS (EL 4)

Once Tarkilar became a huecuva, he lost control of many of his undead. He quickly relocated these former minions to this chamber, where they await intruders.

**Creatures:** The eight humanoid zombies in here lurch into life when intruders enter this room.

➤ **Medium Zombies (8):** hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 191.



## K56. TARKILAR'S CAVERN (EL 9)

This cavern has seen better days. It was probably once a fairly well-appointed room, complete with carpets, a laboratory, a small altar, and a bed, but some recent terrific explosion has scattered the furnishings of the room into piles of twisted rubble along the edges of the cave.

This room is the lair of the third cultist, Tarkilar.

**Creatures:** Tarkilar spends most of his time worrying at the wires that bind his chainmail to his bones and arguing with what he thinks are the voices in his head. In truth, these voices are real and come from an invisible quasit named Gutturut who once served Tarkilar as a minion but is now only a tormentor.

➤ **Tarkilar, Male Gnoll Huecuva** **Clr4/Rgr1/Ftr1**: CR 9; Medium Undead; HD 8d12+3; hp 62; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; BAB +6/+1; Grap +11; Atk +12/+7 melee (2d4+8, +1 spiked chain) or +9 melee (1d6+5, slam); SA spells, favored enemy (elves +2), rebuke/command undead, huecuva blight; SQ darkvision 60 ft., turn resistance +2, damage reduction 15/silver, divine conversion, wild empathy; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +7; Str 20, Dex 10, Con —, Int 7, Wis 17, Cha 13.

**Skills:** Climb +8\*, Concentration +7, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Listen +6, Search +2, Spot +9. **Feats:** Craft Wondrous Item, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Power Attack, Toughness, Track.

**Divine Conversion:** A cleric who becomes a huecuva loses access to the domains he had in life and replaces them with the Death and Evil domains.

**Huecuva Blight (Su):** Victims hit with a successful attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or fall prey to the huecuva blight. The incubation period is one day, and it immediately causes 1d2 points of temporary Strength and temporary Constitution damage after the incubation period. An infected victim must make a saving throw each day or take another 1d2 points of temporary Strength and temporary Constitution damage. The effects of huecuva blight are cumulative each day until the victim reaches 0 Constitution (and dies), makes two consecutive successful saves, or receives magical treatment (such as a *remove disease* spell).

**Spells Prepared** (5/5/4; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* ×2, *guidance*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*cause fear*\*, *doom*, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *obscuring mist*; 2nd—*desecrate*\*, *bull's strength*, *hold person*, *silence*.

\*Domain Spell. **Domains:** Death (death touch 1/day), Evil (evil spells cast at +1 caster level).

**Languages:** Gnoll

**Possessions:** +1 chainmail (wired directly to his flesh and bones—removing it takes 1 hour of work), +1 spiked chain (wired directly to his arms—removal takes 10 minutes and Tarkilar cannot be disarmed), wand of inflict moderate wounds (35 charges), garnet-studded gold holy symbol of Erythnul (425 gp).

Until recently, Tarkilar was the most powerful of the three cultists. As a 7th-level cleric/1st-level ranger/1st-level fighter, he commanded the most defensible lair in the complex and served as

the main point of contact between this group and their mysterious superiors. This all ended a few months ago. Flush with money from the completion of the *Soulcage*, Tarkilar was finally able to afford a costly component to a ritual he believed would transform him into a lich. Unfortunately, the ritual was botched and caused a great explosion in this room (which also collapsed the ceiling of area K53); Tarkilar was slain by the explosion, but at the same time, the necromantic ritual partially worked. He rose from the ashes of his failure as a huecuva. Unfortunately, the ritual drained him of several levels of experience and left him a raving lunatic. Since the failure, he has lurked in his cavern with only Gutturut, a quasit he befriended with the aid of a *lesser planar ally* spell, as company.

Tarkilar is an intimidating sight: an undead gnoll with a suit of chainmail and a spiked chain wired directly onto his rotting flesh. He's nearly skeletal, and his dry skin is stretched tight over his bones. Clumps of his fur have torn free, leaving several bald patches in his once-thick pelt. His eyes glow with a nasty yellow light, as does his saliva. His fangs are jagged, sharp, and broken.

➤ **Gutturut, Quasit**: hp 16; *Monster Manual* 41.

Gutturut takes great glee in watching his one-time pal slowly grow insane. A few weeks ago, Tarkilar's friendship with the quasit finally faded and he attacked Gutturut, who escaped by turning invisible and flying away. Since then, Gutturut has entertained himself by tormenting the huecuva by pretending to be a set of different personalities arguing in its head.

**Tactics:** Upon seeing living creatures enter his lair, Tarkilar flies into a kill-crazy rampage, casting spells until an enemy comes within range of his spiked chain, then resorting to melee attacks. The undead gnoll is a cunning combatant and uses Power Attack wisely. If an alarm has been raised in the complex, Tarkilar has already cast his long-duration defensive spells. Gutturut watches quietly from a vantage point on the northern wall, waiting to see who wins the battle. If the PCs win, the quasit follows them around invisibly and waits for a good chance to cause some mischief.

**Treasure:** Gutturut recently stole the eighth wand of control water from Triel, who has yet to notice the theft. Gutturut isn't quite sure what to do with the wand, but he knows Triel wants it. Eventually, he plans to use it as a bargaining chip with the beautiful cleric to gain her as an ally.

## CONCLUSION: FIGHTING THE FLOOD

Once the party manages to recover all eight wands of control water, they should return to the surface and report the good news to Jenya. Their return couldn't happen at a better time. The rains have been hitting Cauldron hard, and the central lake has just started to seep into the closest buildings. If the waters aren't controlled soon, the flood damage could be extensive. Jenya takes one of the wands and calls upon the aid of the fellow clerics in her church, as well as those of Kord, Pelor, and Wee Jas—no clerics of Wee Jas respond. She might also call upon any PCs who can use the wands to help. Over the next few



miserable hours, Jenya, any divine spellcasting PCs, and the other clerics can force back the waters until the rains falter. The whole ordeal takes 1d4+4 hours, -1 hour for each two wands of *control water* recovered; the night drains a total of 80 charges from the wands (split evenly among all the wands recovered). After the night is over, though, the PCs have saved several businesses from suffering great damage, and they find their popularity in the city rising once again.

The rains continue on and off throughout the rest of the winter, but it's nothing that the newly recovered wands can't handle. Eventually, the winter passes, and the churches of Cauldron prepare for the year with a newfound respect for the Flood Festival. Jenya gladly pays the PCs their reward (5,000 gp), even if the were good-hearted enough not to ask for one in the first place. All is well again in Cauldron . . . for the time being. . .

## CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Although Flood Season is over, and the PCs have earned a much deserved break, the campaign is just beginning. The PCs should have reached 6th level by the end of this adventure. This should put them in prime condition to begin the third installment of the **Adventure Path: Shattered City** series, which will appear in *DUNGEON* #102. The PCs have probably forged some lasting friendships with some of the local citizens, such as Jenya, Shensen, and even Artus; they have likely made some powerful enemies whether any of the villains survived or not. Perhaps most important of all, their fame is growing by leaps and bounds. Only time will tell how some of the less-well-intentioned factions in and around Cauldron respond to the PCs growing power and fame.

## APPENDIX I: NEW MONSTER

### Harpoon Spider

#### Large Aberration

**Hit Dice:** 4d8+8 (26 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Armor Class:** 16 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3/+10

**Attack:** Bite +5 melee, or two fangs +6 ranged

**Full Attack:** Bite +5 melee and two fangs +6 ranged

**Damage:** Bite 2d4+4 and poison, or fangs 1d4 plus harpooning

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Harpooning, poison

**Special Qualities:** Dark-vision 120 ft., evasion, spines, web movement

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 9

**Skills:** Balance +6, Climb +16\*, Hide +8, Jump +16\*, Spot +6, Tumble +10

**Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip (B), Lightning Reflexes

**Environment:** Any underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or nest (3-12)

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 5-8 HD (Large), 9-12 HD (Huge)

A denizen of the Underdark, the harpoon spider is a lightning fast predator much feared by other denizens of the "night below."

Close examination reveals that the harpoon spider isn't a true spider at all, but something far more sinister. It superficially resembles a horse-sized black widow, save that it has ten legs and a body covered with hundreds of razor sharp spines. Each of its legs terminates in a tiny clawed hand, and its eight eyes are horribly humanlike. It can extend either of its large mandibles on a long leathery tendril with surprising force.

Harpoon spiders are quite intelligent and can often be found nesting with ettercaps and monstrous spiders. The harpoon spiders use these creatures to bolster the defenses of their lair. They have particularly morbid senses of humor and enjoy "playing" with their food while it ripens on their spines.

Harpoon spiders speak Undercommon.





## COMBAT

A harpoon spider is a hunter, often stalking victims in a large territory around its lair. In combat, it uses its harpoon fangs to reel in prey, using its Improved Trip feat to administer a bite once its opponent has been reeled in. If the terrain permits, the spider prefers to attack victims from high vantage points (such as ledges).

**Harpooning (Ex):** As a full attack action, a harpoon spider can make two attacks with its fangs, firing them up to a range of 30 feet. The spider can fire at two different targets if it chooses, and can fire at targets at range while biting a close opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. A successful hit deals 1d4 points of damage as the harpoon hooks the flesh of the target and immediately exudes a thick, sticky glue. The spider can reel in a harpoon as a free action; treat this as a trip attack against any creature attached to the fang. Failure indicates that the harpoon rips free (and deals another 1d4 points of damage to the victim). Success indicates that the victim is pulled off its feet and dragged back to the spider, who can immediately make a free bite attack against the victim. The harpoon spider can only pull a creature smaller than itself in this manner. Attempts to retract a creature of its size or larger automatically cause the fang to rip free as if the trip attack failed. The glue exuded by the spider's fangs quickly decomposes, and at the end of the spider's action the fang automatically detaches.

**Poison (Ex):** Bite, Fortitude save (DC 14); initial damage 1d6 temporary Dexterity, secondary damage 2d6 temporary Dexterity.

**Spines (Ex):** Any creature that attacks a harpoon spider with a Small or smaller weapon (including unarmed and natural attacks) must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 16) or suffer 1d6 points of piercing damage from the spider's spines. As a full-round action, a harpoon spider can pick up a smaller helpless creature with its legs and impale the body on the spines; causing 2d6 points of piercing damage. The spider can carry up to three Medium creatures in this manner (although if it carries two, it has a medium load, and if it carries three it has a heavy load). Harpoon spiders often carry their next meals in this manner.

**Web Movement (Ex):** Although they cannot spin webs themselves, harpoon spiders can climb around and through webs with ease using their climb speed. They are immune to the effects of the *web* spell.

**Skills:** \*A harpoon spider gains a +8 racial bonus on Climb and Jump checks.

**Feats:** The harpoon spider gains the Improved Trip feat as a bonus feat, even though it does not have Combat Expertise.

## APPENDIX II: CREATING A WEREBABOON

"Werebaboon" is a lycanthrope template that can be added to any humanoid or giant (referred to hereafter as the "character").

**Size and Type:** The character's type does not change, but the character gains the shapechanger subtype. The werebaboon can assume the shape and characteristics of a baboon. It may also

adopt a hybrid shape that combines features of the character and the baboon. A werebaboon's hybrid form is the same size as the baboon or base form, whichever is larger.

A werebaboon uses either the character's or the baboon's statistics and special abilities in addition to those set out below.

**Hit Dice and Hit Points:** Same as the character plus 1d8 from the baboon form. To calculate total hit points, apply Constitution modifiers according to the score the lycanthrope has in each form. For example a human commoner with a Constitution score of 11 as a human and a Constitution score of 13 as a baboon has 1d4 plus 1d8+1 hit points.

**Speed:** Same as the character or baboon, depending on which form the lycanthrope is using.

**Armor Class:** The character's natural armor increases by +2 in all forms. In hybrid form, the lycanthrope's natural armor bonus is equal to the natural armor bonus of its animal form or its base form, whichever is better.

**Base Attack/Grapple:** Add the base attack for the baboon (+0) to the base attack for the character. The werebaboon's grapple bonus uses its attack and modifiers for Strength and size depending on the werebaboon's form.

**Attacks:** Same as the character or baboon, depending on which form the werebaboon is using. A werebaboon in hybrid form gains a bite for natural attacks. This inflicts damage based on the hybrid form's size:

Hybrid Size	Bite
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6

A hybrid may attack with a weapon and a bite, or may attack with its natural attacks. The bite attack of a hybrid is a secondary attack, but does not penalize the character's attacks with any weapons it wields or its claws. A werebaboon in hybrid form may attack with weapons and use its bite attack as a secondary weapon in place of a weapon wielded in its off hand.

**Damage:** Same as the character or baboon, depending on which form the lycanthrope is using.

**Special Attacks:** A werebaboon retains all of the special attacks of the character or animal, depending on which form it is using, and gains those listed below. A werebaboon spellcaster cannot cast spells with V, S, or M components in animal form, or spells with V components in hybrid form.

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):** Any humanoid or giant hit by a natural werebaboon's bite attack in animal or hybrid form must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract lycanthropy. If the victim is not within one size category of the werebaboon (for example, a hill giant bitten by a wererat), the victim cannot contract lycanthropy from that lycanthrope. Afflicted lycanthropes cannot pass on the curse of lycanthropy.

**Special Qualities:** A werebaboon retains all the special qualities of the character and the baboon, and also gains the following:

**Alternate Form (Su):** A werebaboon can shift into baboon or



hybrid form as though using the *polymorph* spell on itself, though its gear is not affected and it does not regain hit points for changing form. It does not assume the ability scores of the animal, but instead adds the baboon's physical ability score modifiers to its own ability scores, as detailed below. A werebaboon can also assume a bipedal hybrid form with opposable thumbs and animalistic features. Changing to or from baboon or hybrid form is a standard action. A slain werebaboon reverts to its humanoid form, although it remains dead. Separated body parts retain their baboon form, however. Afflicted werebaboons find this ability difficult to control, but natural lycanthropes have full control over this power.

**Damage Reduction (Ex):** A werebaboon in animal or hybrid form gains DR 10/silver.

**Lycanthropic Empathy (Ex):** In any form, werebaboons can communicate and empathize with baboons. This gives them a +4 racial bonus to checks when influencing the baboon's attitude and allows the communication of simple concepts and (if the baboon is friendly) commands, such as "friend," "foe," "flee," and "attack."

**Low-light Vision (Ex):** The werebaboon gains low-light vision in any form.

**Scent (Ex):** The werebaboon gains scent in any form.

**Base Saves:** The werebaboon adds its base saves as a baboon (Fort +2 and Ref +2) to its total saves.

**Abilities:** All werebaboons gain +2 to Wisdom. In addition, when in baboon or hybrid form, a werebaboon's physical ability scores improve as follows: Strength +4, Dexterity +4, Constitution +2.

**Skills:** The lycanthrope gains skill points equal to (2 + Int

modifier, minimum 1), as if it had multiclassed into the animal type. (Animal is never its first Hit Die, though, and it does not gain quadruple skill points for any animal Hit Dice.) Climb, Listen, and Spot are the baboon's class skills.

**Feats:** Werebaboons receive Alertness and Iron Will as a bonus feat.

**Environment:** Same as either the character or baboon.

**Organization:** Solitary or pair, sometimes family (2–4), or troop (6–10)

**Challenge Rating:** By class level +2

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Usually lawful evil. This is a reflection of how the baboon is perceived, not any innate quality of the baboon itself, so the Dungeon Master can arbitrarily assign the alignment of the animal form.

**Advancement:** By character class

**Level Adjustment:** Same as the character, +2 (afflicted) or +3 (natural). In addition, the character's effective character level is increased by +1 (the racial hit dice of a baboon). Ω

James Jacobs writes, "When I was a kid, I saw a picture of a baboon. The baboon had a huge bloody gash on its face (I assumed from the gape-mouthed, fanged baboon in the picture on the facing page), and was staring directly into the camera with a look of pure evil. Ever since, baboons have freaked me out. When I heard that the werebaboon laid waste to the PCs when this adventure was playtested, I knew my terror had not been misdirected. Beware the baboons!"

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